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Archibald MacLeish, poet and dramatist: a study of thirty year's criticism: 1932-1962

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Archibald MacLeish, Poet and Dramatist:

A Study of Thirty Year's Criticism:

1932 - 1962

By

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a study of criticism of the works of Archibald MacLeish. The period covered runs from 1932 through 1961. The study considers all the poetry and drama, but none of the prose except for the papers on the Book of Job which MacLeish wrote in connection with his play J.B. The materials are organized into three chapters and an extensive bibliographical apparatus. The dissertation, though it may be said to be generally favorable to MacLeish, imposes no criteria of its own on his works.

The first chapter deals with views of MacLeish's poetic technique, as it is exemplified in his poems and minor plays. It points out that in the opinion of most of his critics the poet is successful in his employment of the devices of "modern poetry." Much of the technical criticism is aimed at Conquistador, the winner of the 1932 Pulitzer Prize for poetry. Although the bulk of it is approving, some of it finds the imagery employed too dense and too rapidly cumulative for a precise impact on the reader. The "invention" of terza assonanza in the same poem is the subject of considerable praise. Similar verse techniques in the dramas for radio broadcast have attracted favorable attention, as has the device of the announcer as a dramatic figure. But on the whole it is the short lyrical works that have met with

the greatest favor and attention. On the other hand, MacLeish's poetry has also encountered critical disapproval for its technical deficiencies. Two telling points (represented respectively by the views of William Van O'Connor and Rolfe Humphries) are that the verse lacks discipline, and that it is imitative.

Chapter Two deals with critical views of MacLeish's poetic development. MacLeish's verse is seen to fall into three periods, identifiable by subject matter: (1) a concern with the poetic self; (2) a concern with man as a member of society; (3) (after World War II) a concern with man in his relation to God. Some critics prefer to interpret MacLeish only on a surface sociological or political level; for example, Dayton Kohler treats of his interest in social reforms, and Edwin Honig deals with him from a Marxist viewpoint. More, however, are concerned with him as a poetic voice capable of getting at the "poetic truth" of a problem to which he usually offers no solution. Some, such as Dorothy Van Ghent, feel that one of the flaws in MacLeish is in the duality of his problems, one aspect of which operates on a recognizably human level, but the other on a plane that is insusceptible of intellectual certainty and that cannot be solved. Another view, represented by Hyatt Waggoner, identifies the problem as a concern with the destruction of pre-World War I values by the advances of modern science --

values for which MacLeish fails to find adequate replacements. Chapter II concludes with a resumé of views of Songs for Eve, the consensus of which is that the problem is here solved in a religious context and in a growing faith in man's potentialities.

Chapter III devotes itself to criticism of J.B. The main objections to the play have been theological. The most frequent charge is that the play deviates from the Book of Job on which it is based, and solves the problem of man vis a vis God improperly with regard to its source. It is also argued that MacLeish raises the question of man's relation to Deity, but answers it obliquely by providing a resolution based on the relation of man to man. Lastly, some critics are incensed because they believe that the play promotes nihilism and denies traditional religious beliefs by focusing man's faith on human love. But there is also favorable criticism that praises MacLeish's willingness to deal with a difficult theme and that lauds his technical proficiency.

The bibliography appended to this study provides, besides the usual listings of primary and secondary sources, two sections designed to aid those who wish to do further research on specific aspects of MacLeish's output. Section III contains resumés of the chief critiques of the poems and minor dramas, in each instance indicating by keyed

symbols the precise works considered there in detail, so that the reader may readily track down what has been said about any given poem. Section IV treats the J. B. criticism in the same way.

INTRODUCTION

This thesis deals with critical commentary on Archibald MacLeish's writings through the thirty years following his first Pulitzer Prize. It is my belief that MacLeish's works, specifically his poetry and drama, successfully speak for the twentieth-century man, that they shall continue to be read, and therefore they will be the subject of more than casual study in the future.

I

MacLeish, both as public official and as literary figure, has often been referred to as a voice and product of his time. Born, May 7, 1892, in Glencoe, Illinois, he attended Yale University and Harvard Law School. During World War I MacLeish served as a member of an ambulance unit and later as an officer in the Field Artillery. His brother, an aviator, was shot down over Schoore, Belgium, in 1918. MacLeish taught for a year at Harvard following the war, practiced law from 1920 to 1923, and then joined the expatriates in France, taking his family there in the latter year. He returned to the United States in 1928 and went into a brief retirement. It was during this period that he retraced Cortez's march and wrote Conquistador. During the thirties he was on the staff of Fortune magazine and served Harvard University in several capacities. In 1939 MacLeish entered official circles, being

appointed by President Roosevelt Librarian of Congress. He remained in this position until 1944 at the same time serving as Director of the Office of Facts and Figures, (from 1941 to 1942), and later as Assistant Director of the Office of War Information, (from 1942 to 1943). He was Assistant Secretary of State from 1944 to 1945. MacLeish was chairman of the American delegation to the first general conference of UNESCO in 1946 at Paris. Harvard University invited him to become Boylston Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory in 1949. His most recent honor was being named "poet in residence" at Amherst College, where he succeeded the late Robert Frost as Simpson Lecturer in English.[1] Throughout this active career MacLeish has steadily published poetry, drama, and prose essays. Most of his writing has been highly praised. Two of his major works were selected for the Pulitzer Prize: Conquistador (1932) and Collected Poems, 1917-1952. Of the large volume of material published about the man, this thesis deals with that part which pertains specifically to his verse and drama.

II

My investigation of literary criticism of MacLeish's poetry and drama has revealed that many critics have dealt with aspects of his work which contribute to his success. However, the most useful studies appear to me to be singular in approach. Although it may be valuable, no one critical

commentary builds upon its predecessors, but rather each seems to be concerned with one point of view of MacLeish's works to the exclusion of others extant at the time of writing. As I see it, a basic document which brings together the main ideas of these commentaries will show that MacLeish's success lies in his expression of the emotional problems of his time; he speaks for the non-poet. Such a document will also be the basis for future research by cataloging the location and content of extant critical commentary on MacLeish. I have directed my research and organized my text in response to the need for this basic document.

Criticism of Archibald MacLeish's poetry and drama lends itself to organization in three broad groupings: (1) The manner in which he writes (form as opposed to philosophic content), (2) His poetic development (philosophic content as opposed to form), and (3) The play, J.B., which is not related to his previous works by the critical treatments written during the period covered by this thesis. The chapters of my text are based on these groupings. It is a format similar to a research report; however, within the chapters I have arranged the material to present in a logical manner those studies of MacLeish's work which I feel are the most important. In particular I have, in the second and third groupings (Chapters Two and Three of the text) dealt at length with major commentaries which consider

these factors which are the reason for the longevity of the poet's productions.

III

I imposed two limits on my research for this thesis, which I should perhaps explain here.

The criticism here dealt with excludes commentary on the prose writings of Archibald MacLeish except for his explication of the Book of Job which he wrote in connection with J.B. Mr. Macleish has been a productive literary figure through the most turbulent period in modern history. Both his prose and the criticisms of ~~it~~ reflect the stresses of major social, economic, and political change. In the same period the semantics of political thought have also changed; yesterday's "unconscious fascist"[2] is today's classical liberal.[3] As socio-economic environment alters so, too, do the labels assigned to the writings of those who propose solutions to society's ills. Though it is true that, in many instances, topical prose retains its popularity because it embodies beliefs which men, in the passage of time, adhere to, making its message philosophy and the document itself literature, I do not believe that sufficient time has passed since the publication of MacLeish's to assign it, and the responses to it, to such a catagory. It also seems to me that MacLeish's statements of his poetic intention and his pronouncements on the role of the poet in

society constitute a separate research area. The critical responses to these statements are, in the main, directed towards the man rather than his works, hence, I shall not take them up here.

I have also excluded pure explication from this report. As interpretation of allusions, references, and the like in order to establish particular meaning, usually for a specific work, explication is as variable, and therefore as limitless, as the experience and knowledge of the explicators. In this report, therefore, I have dealt only with those interpretations of MacLeish's poetry that are directed toward an understanding of his total literary production. There is room for disagreement over what constitutes explication for its own sake and what is determination of meaning leading to understanding of the philosophy of the poetry. Because of this, I have made decisions which to some may seem arbitrary.

IV

Reporting the extant criticism is complicated for several reasons. During the thirty years covered by this thesis, MacLeish's previous poetry, plus that written during the initial decade and a half of the period under consideration, was republished in collected form; thus there are two sets of reviews for much of it. The republication of his works has also resulted in the republication of some of the

criticism. For example, a letter to the editor of the New Republic written by John Peale Bishop in 1933 reappears as part of his Collected Essays in 1948. Obviously, chronological presentation of such criticism would lead to confusion.

Critics, writing about individual works or groups or works by MacLeish, have often made comments which are similar and which, if taken out of context and presented here, would be repetitious. Therefore, in order to avoid the confusion that chronological presentation of republished criticism might cause, and to avoid the monotony of similar comment, I have prepared an annotated bibliography. This indicates by means of a set of symbols, the individual works, whether volumes or specific poems, cited by a critic as evidence or example of his thesis; however it does not include criticism of J.B.

Since the publication and subsequent stage productions of J.B., criticism of MacLeish has been largely concentrated on that work. However, by the end of the three decades covered by this survey, it had not yet been considered by critics in its relation to the total meaning of MacLeish's complete works. For this reason I have included a separate annotated bibliography of the critical articles on J.B.

V

As a basic document this thesis provides a comprehensive review of what professional critics have written. One

can agree or disagree with the comments contained herein and with my selection of certain critics for detailed treatment. As of the time of this writing there is no individual work summarizing the critical treatment of MacLeish which can serve the student as a beginning point for research and study. Since, in my opinion, students will continue to read the works of Archibald MacLeish, I hope that for future research my text and bibliography will provide for some, a place to begin.

CHAPTER ONE

Technical Criticism of MacLeish's Poetry and Drama

In this first chapter I shall briefly present criticism of the technical properties of Archibald MacLeish's poetry and short plays. In contrast to the interest displayed in his poetic development and in his play, J.B., with one or two exceptions critics have been content to deal with these aspects of his work in general terms. This is not to say that the critics have not commented upon form, technique, or style; many have. However, there is little depth to most comments and when they are compared to one another, they are similar in content.

In general, the criticism of the period, 1932 - 1961, approves of how MacLeish, in the manner of Eliot and Pound, fits the technical properties of his verse to the poetic problem it deals with; however, few critics have ventured beyond general descriptive remarks. I have found, usually, the most specific commentaries adverse and those of a general nature favorable. The reason for this tendency of the critics to treat MacLeish's verse in broad terms is that he uses a wide range of technical devices and analysis of one poem rarely produces results applicable to others. The critic's problem can be illustrated by a brief comparison of these lines from "Men".[1]

> Our history is grave noble and tragic.
> Many of us have died and are not remembered.

Many cities are gone and their channels
broken.
We have lived a long time in this land
and with honor.

to these from "Epistle To Be Left in the Earth"[2]

. . . It is colder now,
there are many stars,
we are drifting
North by the Great Bear,
the leaves are falling,
The water is stone in the scooped rocks,
to southward

Red sun grey air:
the crows are
Slow on their crooked wings,
the jays have left us:

For the reviewers of Collected Poems, 1917 - 1952, in which both of these appear, the solution has been to make all-embracing evaluations rather than treat the specific qualities of either. Throughout the criticism of the period this thesis deals with, I have found this solution prevalent.

Commentary on the technical aspects of MacLeish's works can be roughly divided into three parts: Treatments of Conquistador, most of which were written shortly after the poem's appearance in 1932; discussions of his poetry as a whole, usually this is found in the reviews of the collections which appeared in 1933 and 1952; and there is some comment on the radio plays; it is sparse but worth including here. I shall take up the criticism in the order just outlined.

I

The Pulitzer Prize-winning Conquistador[3] is one of the chief foci in all criticism of MacLeish after 1932. In this work MacLeish developed an integration of a broken line similar to that of "Epistle To Be Left in the Earth," with a verse form derived from terza rime. The form relies on assonance rather than rhyme. It has been labeled terza assonanza by James G. Southworth.[4] The combination of the broken line and this new form, which relies heavily on feminine endings, effectively overcomes the danger of monotony inherent in the poem which is long (about 2,000 lines) and told from a single viewpoint. The result is that the poet is able to sustain the forward movement of the poem and present a series of personal and sensuous images reflecting the reverie of a tired old campaigner. In the section entitled "Bernal Diaz' Preface to His Book," MacLeish effectively combines a statement of the poem's subject, a personal story of the Conquest written in resentment of the "official" histories, with the setting and the emotional tone of the work:[5]

> We that were wounded often for no pay:
> We that died and were dumped cold in
> the bread sacks:
> Bellies up: the birds at us: floating
> for days
>
> And none remembering which it was that
> was dead there
> Whether of Búrgos or Yúste or Villalár:
> Where have they written our names? What
> have they said of us?

They call the towns for the kings that
  bear no scars:
They keep the names of the great for
  time to stare at --
The bishops rich-men generals cocks-
  at-arms:

. . . . . .

What are we? When will our fame come?
An old man in a hill town
                a handful of

Dust under the dry grass at Otumba

~~Unknown names~~
            hands vanished
                faces

Many gone from the day
            unspeakable numbers

Lives forgotten
            deeds honored in strangers

"That which I have myself seen and the
  fighting". . .

The immediate critical reaction to the poem was that, although successful, it was primarily an experiment. Edna Lou Walton wrote, in 1934, "He has experimented with rhymes and has made of the terza rima the perfect medium for his purposes in Conquistador."[6] But Allen Tate was more positive; he called it, "the only metrical achievement by a poet of this generation."[7] In earlier evaluation of the poem, Stephen Vincent Benét had denied the applicability of "experiment:" He wrote; "It is impossible to say of 'Conquistador' that it is 'a successful experiment' or an interesting development in narrative! It is a poem, not an experiment and it will be read and reread for a good many years to come."[8]

The total impression of MacLeish's technique in Conquistador was explained by Benét thus: "This is both a new kind of writing and a very old one. The assonant beat, the occasional deliberate throwing away of emphasis, the hard rebellious texture are of our own time. But there is something behind them that goes back to very old things."[9] Lincoln Kirstein, in 1932, remarked a linguistic similarity to Anglo-Saxon,[10] and four years later W. E. Aiken found some lines patterned faithfully after the Old English.[11]

It was, however, the development of imagery in Conquistador that drew the most comment - much of it negative - during the period covered by this report. Even Benét, in his complimentary review, wrote that "the telescoping of events and the direct sequence of pictures without explanation leave the reader a trifle confused."[12] Southworth made a very similar observation eighteen years later: "Often the telescoping of events, the too abrupt breaks between books, the paucity of materials make any strong unified aesthetic import impossible." In Southworth's opinion, Conquistador was overpraised and needlessly obscure.[13] Kimon Friar found enervating and debilitating the dependence on images of light, rain, and especially on those of wind.[14] And twenty-one years after its first appearance, Hayden Carruth wrote of Conquistador, "one still feels that there are tricks and unnecessary devices: The ellipses, the broken phrases, the curious punctuation."[15]

Not all comment was negative; many critics agreed with Babette Deutsch, who wrote "The success of Conquistador is largely the success of his imagery, his ability to create atmosphere, to give the special curve of the thing seen, the peculiar tang of the thing on the tongue or in the nostrils."[16]

While many early critics were not satisfied that MacLeish had an original and worthwhile "meaning" in his verse, they were, typically, pleased by his obvious ability to compose technically sound poetry. For example, Howard Blake wrote, "Though his aesthetic is derivative and his ideas are few, he is probably the most brilliant technician amongst the moderns.....Passages in 'Conquistador,' and some others impress one with a very real visual perception and technical mastery. He frequently succeeds.....in rousing responses his reader would find difficult to define in prose. This is unusual lyric power."[17]

II

In commenting on MacLeish's poetry other than Conquistador the critics place most emphasis on his short lyrical poems. Most of these were written early in his career and have been included in the later collections. The critics seem to feel that MacLeish's varied style has been most successful in poems which are the brief expression of an intense personal feeling. Frequently cited is "Yacht for Sale"[18] part of which I include here as an example of

the type of poem most often applauded:

My youth is
Made fast
To the dock
At Marseilles
Rotting away
With a chain to her mast,

She that saw slaughters
In foreign waters:

She that was torn
With the winds off the Horn: . . .

. . . . . .

It's easy to see
She was frail in the knee
And too sharp in the bow --
You can see now.

The approval of this kind of poem is reflected in Richard Eberhart's review of Collected Poems, 1917 - 1952. In commenting on the success of some of the more recent verses he notes their similarity to the earlier: "I feel MacLeish is best, that the nature of his talent shows best, in his short lyrics. Of these there is a copious number of indestructable pieces. It is gratifying to discover among his most recent poems lyrics as pure and effective as the best of his earlier ones."[19]

In describing what he calls "the essential style of the man," Eberhart briefly discusses poetic lines in MacLeish's work: "There is a plain line, from which one siezes the meaning as it flies. The pleasure is direct, simple, and may be forceful. ...This is MacLeish's line. It deals with what it touches resiliently and intelligently, always sensi-

tively. It states more than it evokes." According to Eberhart, MacLeish fails when he attempts to write deep evocative lines which have strange pervasive images. The poet "must pay for an objective abilfty with some lack of subjective depth."[20]

John Ciardi, also reviewing Collected Poems, 1917 - 1952,[21] finds two successful types of line in MacLeish's poetry. One is the "staccato, broken line" of the sort in "Epistle To Be Left in the Earth." The other is the "rising line," which consists of a "drawn-out wavering series of rising inflections." This line is present in much of MacLeish's poetry, often in combination with the staccato line. It is, for example, the line of "The End of the World":[22]

> And there, there overhead, there, there,
> hung over
> Those thousands of white faces, those
> dazed eyes,
> There in the starless dark the poise,
> the hover,
> There with vast wings across the canceled
> skies,
> There in the sudden blackness the black
> pall
> Of nothing, nothing, nothing -- nothing
> at all.

My study of the critics listed in the annotated bibliography has revealed that invariably the poems cited as MacLeish's successes have been those whose lines have the qualities described by Eberhart and Ciardi. In addition, more often than not, in these poems MacLeish employs assonance in a manner similar to that in Conquistador.

The use of terza assonanza frequently recurs in MacLeish's poetry after 1932; a successful variant has been the couplet with feminine ending. Critics have approved MacLeish's use of apocopated rhyme, as in these lines from "Speech to the Detractors" published in 1936:[23]

Because the captains and the kings are
  dust --
Need we deny our hearts
Their natural duty and the thing they
  must do?

Not to the wearers of wreaths but those
  who bring them,
Coming with heaped-up arms,
Is fame the noble and ennobling thing.

Bequeathers of praise, the unnamed
  numberless peoples
Leave on the lasting earth
Not fame but their heart's love of fame
  for keeping.

They raise not alone memorial monuments:
Outlasting these
They raise their need to render greatness
  honor.

These then are the technical properties of MacLeish's poetry most often dealt with by the critics: The staccato-broken lines, lines of rising inflection, and terza assonanza sometimes employed with apocopated rhyme. It is interesting to note that the poems lacking these devices are usually ignored by commentators, in fact, those who attack the technical aspects of MacLeish's poetry use the poems containing these devices as their evidence.

III

Criticism of MacLeish's poetic method is generally, as that cited for Conquistador, favorable but qualified. Although most objections to MacLeish's technique are directed towards specific poems, there are some attacks of a more inclusive nature. There are those who feel that modern poetry, and in particular, that of the so-called "Waste Land school," lacks discipline. Two examples of this objection are provided by Yvor Winters and William Van O'Connor. Winters' sums up his complaint in In Defense of Reason: "One feels, rightly or wrongly, a correlation between the control evinced within a poem and the control within the poet behind it. The laxity of one ordinarily appears to involve laxity in the other. The rather limp versification of Mr. Eliot and Mr. MacLeish is inseparable from the spiritual limpness that one feels behind the poems."[24] Again, he says, "In so far as free verse has encouraged careless substitution in the older meter, has encouraged an approximation of the movement of accentual-syllabic verse to that of purely accentual, its effect has quite perceptively been undesirable."[25]

O'Connor finds in MacLeish's poetry a "failure to reconcile opposites, to achieve tension." In commenting on Conquistador, he states his opinion that in some lines "he [MacLeish] simply itemizes after the manner of prose," and suggests that the difference between prose and MacLeish's

poetry is but the omission, by the poet, of punctuation. "At its best," says O'Connor, "his poetry is smooth, a liquefaction of phases." He notes that in three of MacLeish's poems, "You, Andrew Marvell," "Immortal Autumn," and "Epistle To Be Left in the Earth," there are a total of only three periods (.). This fact is proof, he implies, that there cannot be successful "tensional elements in MacLeish's poetry."[26]

Another adverse critical view of MacLeish's technique is that exemplified by the attacks of Rolfe Humphries and Morton Zabel. These see in MacLeish's technique a greater reliance on Eliot and Pound than the term influence normally implies. Humphries charges that MacLeish is not so much influenced by Eliot as dependent upon his and other's writing "for his very existance." To support his accusation, Mr. Humphries prints in its entirety "The Pot of Earth" in parallel with Eliot's "The Waste Land" as a demonstration that "the whole complex of Eliot's language, tone, rhythm, anthropological reference, and symbolical allusiveness, has been elaborately imitated by Mr. MacLeish."[27] The similarity between parts of the poems is recognizable to anyone who is familiar with the work of both poets, but Mr. Humphries' all-inclusive charge that MacLeish's poetic progress "has been from imitation to more extended feats of that art"[28] does not stand up when one reads <u>New Found Land</u> or <u>Frescoes for Mr. Rockefeller's City</u>, both published prior to Mr. Humph-

ries' article. The first of these he conveniently does not consider, and the second he admits would be difficult to present as proof of imitation.

Zabel's attack on MacLeish also claims that MacLeish's poetry is mainly derivative; but as sources, his citations include almost a whole generation of French poets; in my opinion they suffer a lack of validity by reason of sheer dilution.[29] Mr. Zabel's article was prompted by the poet's public statements, and in particular by his essays on the role of the poet in time of public crisis, which, Zabel felt, were inconsistent both with his actions and his own poetry. But it is not within the scope of this report to pursue Mr. Zabel's attack further; I have considered it worthy of mention here because it is a prominent item in MacLeish bibliographies.[30]

The opinion of most critics is summed up in the comment of Vernon Loggins, who wrote that MacLeish's verse "illustrates a happy synthesis of the theories of Pound and Eliot."[31] Elizabeth Donnald, writing a year before the appearance of Zabel's attack, finds that the identification with the "T.S. Eliot waste landers" arose from the fact that MacLeish's philosophy of despair and subjectivity is similar to theirs; she adds, "perhaps the most important American poet today [1940] is Mr. Archibald MacLeish."[32]

Since the publication of MacLeish's Collected Poems, 1917 - 1952, critics, looking back upon his production

disagree on the value of his aesthetic, but his craftsmanship is unquestionably approved. Perhaps Kimon Friar best states the view of the most recent commentators: "No matter how often he may have changed his views in regard to war or the poet's participation in the social ordering, the fact remains that MacLeish is primarily a poet, a man of passion and compassion, a craftsman of integrity."[33] Even John Brunini, who finds little meaning in MacLeish's work, states that it is "a superb exhibition of craftsmanship."[34] And Richard Eberhart says, "There is something basically lithe, wiry, direct, and clearseeing about his talent."[35] Others speak in similar vein.

IV

In his verse drama MacLeish adapted his poetic technique to the needs of public performance; particularly noteworthy in this respect were the radio plays. In these MacLeish attempted to portray the excitement of the contemporary event by word alone. On the printed page the verses bear a resemblance to the forms cited above; but if one reads aloud with close attention to the end punctuation -- much more frequent than in the earlier verses -- a different effect becomes clear. The effect is best seen in the lines given to the announcer, whom MacLeish develops as a dramatic character in both Air Raid and The Fall of the City.

The Fall of the City[36] deals with the coming of a

dictator to a free city. An announcer, high above the city square, tells of the panic seizing the crowd and recounts the news brought by messengers as the Conqueror lands and approaches. As doom draws nearer the crowd can do nothing but vacillate and argue. The Conqueror enters--a mailed figure walking with the clang of metal on the paving stones--and the crowd grovels. Only the announcer realizes that the people have been vanquished by their own fears. MacLeish's "staccato line" carries the excitement of the climax. Here are the lines of the announcer which he speaks as the Conqueror arrives:

> The crowd is retreating--watching the
> empty street:
> The shouts die.
> The voices are silent.
> They're watching. . . .
> They stand in the slant of the sunlight
> and watching.
> The silence after the drums echoes the
> drum beat.
> Now there's a sound. They see him. They
> must see him!
> They're shading their eyes from the sun:
> there's a rustle of whispering:
> We can't see for the glare of it . . . .
> Yes! Yes! . . .
> He's there in the end of the street in
> the shadow. We see him!
> He looks huge--a head taller than anyone:
> Broad as a brass door: a hard hero:
> Heavy of heel on the brick: Clanking
> with metal:
> The helm closed on his head: the eyeholes
> hollow.
>
> He's coming! . . .
> He's clear of the shadow! . . .
> The sun takes him.

In this play can be found similar passages in which the nervous chatter of the population is conveyed by the same technique. Air Raid[37] has a simpler plot than The Fall of of City; it deals with the refusal of a populace to face up to the horrors of modern warfare and take the steps necessary to protect itself. The announcer is the major spokesman. Passages of the same kind are employed, reminiscent of the early verse in appearance, but having the same auditory effect as the lines quoted above. In the opinion of Dayton Kohler, the development of the announcer as a participant produced "the most effective device for interpretation and comment that writers have had since the chorus of Greek drama, a modern dramatic image that provides a classic order of suspence."[38] To Merrill Denison, the successful conveyance of the emotional moment through a medium which relies completely on auditory effect meant that MacLeish had demonstrated the potential of radio for poetry and poetry for radio.[39]

V

It is clear from the comments of the critics that MacLeish is considered one of the most competent versifiers among the modern poets; that there is some difference of opinion is to be expected. Such disagreement will always arise when qualitative statements are made about the product of an essentially subjective discipline. Obviously there

can be no absolute standards even for the technical aspects of poetry. In terms of numbers alone, however, the compliments outweigh the disapprovals.

If one recalls the passages quoted in the preceding sections, one can see that they convey responses to three vast aspects of the human environment: the cosmos, nature, and time (both historical and infinite). But the philosophical import of the content of his poetry is perplexing to many, and by far the greater volume of MacLeishian criticism is concerned with "meaning." The enduring popularity of a poet's work results not only from his mastery over words but from the value of the content of those words over a much longer period than that covered by this survey. Yet the beginnings of understanding and hence the establishment of a poet's position are in the writings of his contemporaries. The critics of the last thirty or so years have considered the poetry of MacLeish in the respect mentioned and have not agreed on the philosophic direction of his meaning. There have been many articles written which attempt to explain a systematic development of a philosophic meaning in MacLeish's poetry; they all have in common an aura of inconclusiveness. In the following chapter some of these attempts are considered.

CHAPTER TWO

MacLeish's Poetic Development

Critical accounts of the development of philosophical meaning in MacLeish's poetry vary both in their concept of the poetic problem he proposes and in the depth to which they investigate the problem. To present such investigations in the strict order of their appearance would needlessly juxtapose incompatible approaches. To avoid this, I shall discuss various theories in what I consider to be an ascending order of perceptiveness.

I

Before dealing with specific critical theories, it would be best to describe the overall pattern of subject matter in MacLeish's poetry about which there is general agreement. The poems written prior to 1933 are almost all concerned with man as an individual; he is particularized in the poetic voice which proclaims the indeterminate nature of his position in a vastness known but not understood. Such poems include "The Pot of Earth" (1925), "The Hamlet of A. MacLeish" (1928), "Einstein" (1929), "Epistle To Be Left in the Earth" (1930), and Conquistador (1932).

A bit later, in the early thirties, MacLeish began to write about man collectively, as the member of a group; during this time he was concerned with man facing vast

social, economic, and political forces. This concern marks a definite turn from what in his earlier poetry appeared to be an interest in insoluble metaphysical problems to one in less abstract and more clearly definable subject matter. In particular he dealt with the problems facing society in America. The works of this interest include "American Letter" (1930), Conquistador (1932), Panic (1935), Air Raid (1939), and "America Was Promises" (1939).

MacLeish's literary efforts during World War II consisted mainly of prose articles. But two outstanding verse works written since the Nuclear Age placed mankind under threat of annihilation are Songs for Eve (1954), and J.B. (1958). In these he returns to the earlier concern with man challenged by forces outside himself.

The chronological order of the poems - admittedly the above is not a complete list - in itself presents a complexity to those who attempt to provide straightforward assessments of poetic development. There are no distinct boundaries to MacLeish's phases, if one may use that term; his concerns merge. For example, some critics find Conquistador, with its panoramic background, a logical continuation of the problem of the individual in a vastness, expressed here in geography, but otherwise similar to the early poems. Others find, in its tale of group heroism and action, the beginnings of the poet's concern with the problems of man as the member of a social group. Both interpretations are probably valid. The point is that

attempts to arrange MacLeish's works into chronological phases in order to demonstrate a thematic progression result inconclusively. The more successful explorations of the poet's thematic development deal not with phases but with a continuous growth of idea. Usually these explorations relate the poet's subject matter to what they believe to be MacLeish's philosophical viewpoint; sometimes, however, it is related to a series of such viewpoints. In the passages that follow I shall examine some of these more successful explorations; on these there are numerous variations, but they involve merely disagreements as to the roles of particular poems in the interpretation.

II

At the outset it must be admitted that one can discuss the works of Archibald MacLeish and not be concerned with an overall philosophical development. It is not difficult to extract the images in the poet's works, establish a theoretical pattern based on surface meaning alone, and then discuss this pattern without going beyond a recognition that MacLeish is aware of forces acting upon man. But the poet offers no way for man to communicate with, or even to comprehend his relationship to, these forces. This omission means that there is no resolution, in the usual sense of the word. For the critic who wishes to recognize MacLeish as a major figure in poetry, the lack of a resolution can mean that

there is no thesis to present, attack, or defend. This is a situation that in itself can be the source of critical comment. Robert Penn Warren sees MacLeish's defect as a poet as residing in an imprecision of theme. In his opinion, MacLeish accomplishes little more than the presentation of a mood; to Warren the poet's formula is "a deft catalogue" of stimuli, in the form of images drawn from nature, related to a single question in each poem.[1] According to Warren, this poetic question is presented in the very catalogue of images; it is an attempt to give a defined theme purged of opposing stresses. It is for this reason that it is singularly undramatic. "It is poetry of the single impulse, which requires no resolution. This implies ... formlessness, a defect in logic." The result, says Warren, is "little more than the incidental excitement of the poetic perceptions."[2] The lack of viewpoint, which this critic sees in MacLeish, he defines as a kind of anti-intellectualism; it is limited in so far as it "does not recognize any complexities in human nature or experience that are worth any great trouble on the poet's part to differentiate."[3] This view is not agreed with by most critics who examine MacLeish's poetry. Even one of the poet's most severe critics, Morton Zabel, does not deny that it is the very problem of man's existence that causes the lack of resolution in MacLeish's early poetry.

In an article written much earlier than that cited in

the first chapter, Zabel says that the poetry of MacLeish's early maturity celebrates "with great verbal beauty a surrender to the mystery of existence and the processes of physical anonymity."[4] Perhaps Zabel's statement is best illustrated by the following passage from "The Hamlet of A. MacLeish " -- lines frequently quoted by critics addressing themselves to the problem of man as MacLeish sees it.[5]

> We know what our fathers were but not who we are
> For the names change and the thorns grow over
> the houses.
> We recognize ourselves by a wrong laugh;
> By a trick we have of resembling something.
> Otherwise
> There are strange words and a face in the
> mirror.
>
> We know
> Something we have forgotten too that comforts
> us.

MacLeish here is obviously posing a question of man's facing his own existence; it is one way of summarizing man's query as to the meaning of that existence, and certainly indicates a recognition of complexity in human existence. Zabel sees the same sort of thing in MacLeish's "attempt to harmonize with the abstract ultimates of science" in "Einstein."[6] In that poem MacLeish, in the opinion of most astute evaluators, states the immutability of scientific fact, which exists, but which does not solve the eternal problem of man:[7]

> He can count
> Ocean in atoms and weigh out the air
> In multiples of one and subdivide
> Light to its numbers.
> If they will not speak
> Let them be silent in their particles.

> Let them be dead and he will lie among
> Their dust and cipher them -- undo the signs
> Of their unreal identities and free
> The pure and single factor of all sums -
> Solve them to unity.

Zabel feels, however, that the surrender to an unfathomable force leads to an undermining of the personal resistance by which such surrender "counts for salvation." The progress in anti-intellectual humility, he says, "meant also a progress in stylistic self-effacement."[8] In citing, in this article, the influences on MacLeish, Zabel lists the same poets he names in his later attack in the Partisan Review.[9] But in this earlier appraisal, these are "poetic masters who aided him towards this ... surrender of private intelligence."[10] Zabel, in considering the period of change in subject matter described at the beginning of this chapter, is one of those critics who find in Conquistador a continuance of earlier direction rather than a re-orientation. It is, to Zabel, an example of what can happen when a poet allows the surrender of real certitude to communicate itself to style: in Conquistador MacLeish permitted "the lavish beauty of its materials to become vitiated by the huge extension and dilution of an epic scale unsupported by adequate epic motivation."[11] What drove MacLeish back to the local and specific incidents of his own time, according to Zabel, was the very "irresolution" of his philosophic position. Zabel is not satisfied with MacLeish's poems on the problems of social crises

because, to him they do not state concrete ideas; the poet's judgment is "too satisfied with abstract canons of honor -- canons which risk committal neither to a positive moral dogmatism nor to a practical social risk."[12] Thus in the transition from private to public poetry MacLeish, according to Zabel, produces an art that becomes "an evasion of the specific responsibility to which a poet ... is committed."[13]

More recent support for Zabel's emphasis on the influences in MacLeish's poetic background is to be found in Oscar Cargill's Intellectual America (1941). Cargill writes that the lack of resolution in MacLeish's works can be traced to the ideology of the French Decadents. Although he finds MacLeish's philosophy and technique an outgrowth from this tradition, which had "nurtured and matured" the poet, he felt that MacLeish's later poetry demonstrated a break from it.[14]

In the opinion of other writers, the lack of resolution does not negate the value of the poetry. Although no positive solution is presented in the early poetry, at least one critic finds, in MacLeish's poetic development, a change in mood which in itself implies a meaning of some kind.

This change in direction is described by Elizabeth Donnald as "the transition from despair to hope." She finds MacLeish a voice in and for a modern poetry that "has passed through all the natural stages from cynicism to a

wholesome confidence in our future."[15] While she does not know the motivation behind the shift in viewpoint, Miss Donnald traces a consistent pattern through selected poetry. In the subjective, despairing earlier works, she says, the poet is satisfied to express the complaint, but, since the publication of Conquistador his poetry conveys the belief "that something valid can and will evolve from apparent nothingness if men will it sufficiently to act, to do something about the prevailing conditions among mankind."[16] Though Miss Donnald manages to bring into her discussion every major work of the poet up to the time of her writing, (1940), her thesis can be demonstrated with selected examples from each of the stages that she visualizes.

To Miss Donnald both "The Hamlet" and Conquistador express the despairing attitude of the "waste land." Not many will argue with her contention that "The Hamlet" is "a superb example of the mood of frustration, indecision, and futility." In her opinion, Conquistador too belongs to the waste-land genre because "never is the reader permitted to feel that any good can come out of whatever heroism may have been displayed."[17] The mood of despair Miss Donnald refers to is expressed eloquently in the final futile passage in "The Hamlet." The preceding section has juxtaposed images evoking the sorrow of death, the immutability of the cosmic phenomena, the weakness of man's physical urges, the filth of war and the meaningless death attendant on it,

and the futility of complaint. The final lines express the hopelessness of the individual to act against these facets of his environment and the resultant acceptance of them:[18]

> We must consent now as all men
> Whose rage is out of them must do,
> Cancel this bloody feud, revoke
> All tears, all pain, and to the drum,
> Trump, cannon and the general cheer
> Fight with a shining foil the feigned
> Antagonist for stoops of beer.
> Why should we want revenge of harms
> Not suffered in the public street,
> Or risk with sharp and hurting arms
> The real encounter kept at night
> Alone where none will praise our art?
>
> It is time we should accept . . .
>
> Thou wouldst not think
> How ill all's here about my heart!

As I have said, Miss Donnald offers no reason for the change in mood, but it is present, if one reads from her viewpoint, in Frescoes for Mr. Rockefeller's City,[19] where MacLeish is attacking any system "which may discriminate against any class or classes in America."[20] Public Speech,[21] according to Miss Donnald, is concerned with "the brotherhood-of-man idea." This, she says, illustrates "MacLeish's healthy optimism, for indeed throughout the collection the idea of what is good may come from cooperative effort is always apparent."[22] There is no disputing the supportability of Miss Donnald's opinion; there is for example the very optimistic, (by comparison with the passage quoted from "The Hamlet") admonition in the final lines of Speech to a Crowd":[23]

Let the dead shriek with their whisper-
  ing breath.
Laugh at them! Say the murdered gods
  may wake
But we who work have end of work together.

Tell yourselves the earth is yours to
  take!

Waiting for messages out of the dark
  you were poor.
The world was always yours: you would
  not take it.

Miss Donnald's approach to the poet is based upon a belief that MacLeish's works show a consistent and identifiable change in poetic mood. In some instances her thesis must rely on an imposition of an optimistic viewpoint not supported by the work itself; The Fall of the City[24] is a case in point. In the passage quoted in the first chapter of this report the excitement of the announcer upon the arrival of the Conqueror is demonstrated; in the following lines, the response of the people and the comment of the announcer upon their reaction, which close the play, show something less than optimism:

They cover their faces with fingers.
  They cower before him.
They fall: they sprawl on the stone.
  He's alone where he's walking.
. . . . . .
                There's no one!...
There's no one at all!...
    No one!...
      The helmet is hollow!
. . . . . .
They don't see or won't see. They are
  silent . . . .

The people invent their oppressors: they
  wish to believe in them.

They wish to be free of their freedom:
  released from their liberty: --
The long labor of liberty ended!
                They lie there!
. . . . . .
Listen! They're shouting like troops
  in a victory. Listen --
'The city of masterless men has found
  a master!'
You'd say it was they were the conquerers:
  they that had conquered.
A ROAR OF VOICES
The city of masterless men has found a
  master!
The city has fallen!
The city has fallen!

Miss Donnald admits that MacLeish is driving home the point that despair accomplishes nothing; but she adds her own message, perhaps a valid reading of the poet's intention, though not to be found in the writing itself: "The poet is undoubtedly saying that in this 20th century when emphasis is on machinery, science, capitalism, and collectivism man must labor for liberty and must reaffirm his sense of the value of the human not the mechanical, and the individual not the collective aspects of life."[25]

In view of the conditions at the time the play was written and broadcast, it is desirable, in my opinion, to compare Miss Donnald's interpretation of The Fall of the City with one that is less abstract. Malcolm Cowley saw it as a warning against Fascism. In his analysis, the Conqueror represents the dictators rising to power in Italy and Germany in 1937: "In a sense they are legends created by hope and a fear (and economic interests); in a sense they too are empty suits of armor. MacLeish has found a conception

that is valid for any audience, large or small."[26] However this more practical interpretation may detract from Miss Donnald's view of the play's meaning, we can apply her thesis to "Colloquy for the States"[27] and "America Was Promises."[28] Here it must be agreed that MacLeish, as Miss Donnald contends, presents a strong argument for the future greatness of America.[29]

But Elizabeth Donnald's analysis of MacLeish's poetic development is no more satisfying than that of Warren, Zabel, and Cargill. These critics illustrate an approach to the poet's work which is valid only if one is content to evaluate the poetry on the plane of surface meaning alone. A thoughtful reading of MacLeish produces a dissatisfaction with their views; this is particularly so with Warren's and Zabel's, because, in my opinion, although they attack the lack of resolution in the poems, which they seem to believe are mainly the expressions of emotion, they do not clearly state the problem that he is supposed to resolve. This same sort of surface approach provides essentially the basis of Miss Donnald's remarks; although favorable to the poet, she finds the material for her presentation in the basic mood of emotional response to the poetry. What is missing from these criticisms is any explanation of the reason for the emotion to exist and therefore the need for its expression. That the poems must be judged in terms of their expression of emotion is true; but the emotion is related to something

more meaningful than mere mood. If MacLeish offers no resolution, then the staying power of his verse must rely on its statement of the unresolved problem, and the reader must for some reason accept this as truth, as an expression of that which he is not able to express for himself. This is apparently the source of longevity in MacLeish's writings, though what this truth is the critics thus far discussed have failed to discern. I believe the exact nature of this truth is in the realities of existence as each reader in his own experience has encountered them.

Some examinations of MacLeish's poetry, however, have resulted in explanations of the truth of the philosophic position which underlies it; the success or failure of each must of course be judged in accordance with the same limitation; each is also a product of twentieth-century life. Each critic has applied his own experience and knowledge to his explanation of meaning; thus the solutions vary.

III

It has been remarked in the preceding discussions that MacLeish's earlier poetry was dominated by an emotion which expressed itself as a sense of inadequacy on the part of man as he faced his ever-increasing knowledge of the vastness of his environs. In his interpretation of MacLeish's development, Arthur Mizener finds this feeling persistent in the later works, though less prominent.[30] Mizener explains

the philosophical development in terms of two symbols in MacLeish's works: World War I and America. The change or development has, according to this critic, been in the emotion behind these symbols. In explaining the source on which MacLeish's earliest work depends, Mizener, although he does not pursue it, may have struck upon one of the aspects of truth in MacLeish's poetry that the reader accepts even though no resolution is forthcoming: "MacLeish was brought up in a dying culture, possessing rich and familiar traditions which were naturally attractive to him, but with a set of fundamental beliefs which are not adequate vehicles, in our time, for any sensitive person's responses."[31] This statement is, of course, applicable also to a large portion of the readers of his poetry, particularly those who reached maturity about the same time as MacLeish. In Mizener's view, MacLeish has not been guilty of shifting philosophical allegiances but rather has been shifting his view to meet the needs of a constantly growing sensibility. Throughout the early poetry there is a reliance on "his apprehension of the quality of things, of their nature ... as felt experience."[32] Thus there is a concentration on personal perceptions, the human world. When science destroys the categories of existing ideas, we have the result expressed in "Einstein." Such poetry was, to Mizener, the logical result because the values of a world centered about man were destroyed as that world became

explicable by science. The poet has been searching for "the set of ideas which would make sense of, which would focus most sharply, the sensuous emotional values which he has always felt strongly and which, as he has developed, have become clearer to him."[33] Throughout the period of his early poetry Mizener senses in MacLeish a consistency; it is however a consistency in the search for a more complete consciousness of a feeling and the means to communicate it rather than for a single idea. Such is the feeling expressed in "Yacht for Sale" and "The End of the World." But Mizener, as do most critics, finds the best expression of this early sensibility in "The Hamlet," and also, as do most, he finds the following passage an excellent example of the pain, inadequacy, and instability of the present (1920's) which are the common denominators of the early poems:

> Night after night I lie like this
> listening.
> Night after night I cannot sleep.
> I wake
> Knowing something, thinking some-
> thing has happened.
> I have this feeling a great deal.
> I have
> Sadness often. At night I have
> this feeling.
> Waking I feel this pain as though
> I knew
> Something not to be thought of,
> something unbearable.
> . . . . . .
> And then, speaking, closing a door,
> I see
> Strangely as though I almost saw now,
> some
> Shape of things I have always seen,
> the sun

White on a house and the windows
  open and swallows
In and out of the wallpaper, the
  moon's face
Faint by day in a mirror; I see
  some
Changed thing that is telling, some-
  thing that almost
Tells -- and this pain then, then
  this pain. And no
Words, only these shapes of things
  that seem
Ways of knowing what it is I am
  knowing.[34]

The process of change in poetic attitude is best exemplified, according to Mizener, in the poet's approach to World War I. That personal experience with war is present as a component of the emotional state expressed in the early poems can be demonstrated in this brief passage also from "The Hamlet":[35]

Or see here:
The Marne side. Raining. I am cold
  with fear.
My Bowels tremble. I go on. McHenry
Hands me his overcoat and dies. We
  dig the
Guns out sweating. I am very brave:
Magnificent. I vomit in my mask.

Part of this component was derived from the death of his brother, which is commemorated in "Lines for an Interment,"[36] but even in this poem there are the beginnings of a move away from the personal experience towards the collective. According to Mizener's analysis, MacLeish placed a personal value on World War I out of proportion to its historical value. And before MacLeish could change direction and move towards the second symbol, America, profound and personal

feelings had to be detached.[37] However, although not dominant, there were already present in the early poetry two attitudes towards America: the remembered America of MacLeish's youth portrayed "Eleven" and "The Farm,"[38] and the industrialized America of the twenties portrayed in "And Forty-Second Street" and "Aeterna Poetae Memoria." The change in subject matter is explained by Mizener as the absorption of the comradeship of war into the symbol of greater brotherhood. The new symbol was established in "Speech to those who say Comrade." Thus out of the remembered feelings of his youth and out of the dislike for the America of the twenties evolved a sense of the importance of the common man, "of the simple folk who actually do the work and have the experience at first hand."[39] This is a logical outcome of the conflict inherent in such contrasting emotions for "the common man" is present as a sympathetic component of both views of the homeland. In Frescoes and Public Speech the focus of the poetry is on these "simple folk" although there is still present the earlier feeling of inadequacy. In summary, Mizener explains MacLeish's development from concern with individual experience, particularly during and consequent to World War I, to an emotional identification with America, in particular with the "common" people, as a logical growth in sensibility consistent with the poet's search for a way to express his concern for man in a changing world. In Mizener's

explanation, then, one aspect of the truth of MacLeish's poetry may be observed even though Mizener does not deal with it directly; the destruction of pre-war life and its values poses a problem which MacLeish expresses for his reader.

Though Mizener's pursuit of symbols in MacLeish's poetry provides a valid means of tracing the poet's development, it only partially aids us in determining the philosophical truth that lends them longevity. Part of their success must be laid to the universality of the images derived from nature. In fact, one writer, noting the persistence of these images, went so far as to label MacLeish a "covert pastoral poet."[40] Perhaps he is, but I don't think the serious student of MacLeish's works can accept a theory which says that MacLeish "was steadily, perhaps obsessively concerned with making the poet, himself, into the spittin' modern equivalent of a simple sheppard."[41] There is something to be said however for the use of natural images to convey emotion; Frances Gillmor said it about MacLeish as far back as 1934.[42]

Miss Gillmor relates the cumulative effect of MacLeish's natural images, which is geographical, to a spatial concept which she defines as "an emphasis on the great spaces of the continent stretching west." It is "definitely a shaping factor in the work of Archibald MacLeish."[43] The spatial concept according to Miss Gillmor is MacLeish's way of

"entering into a national emotional heritage" and also "a symbol for him out of negation -- a half-formed answer to the half-formed question which he asks of himself in 'The Hamlet of A. MacLeish.'"[44] In this explanation, MacLeish confronts the problem of the individual encountering a universe silent in response to his half-formed questioning of its meaning and this "provides the tragic motif" of his work.[45] From Miss Gillmor's thesis another facet of the staying power of the poet's writings can be extracted; there is possible, in my opinion, an identification by the reader of himself with the poetic narrator, for who has not experienced the sensation expressed in "You, Andrew Marvell"?[46]

> And here face down beneath the sun
> And here upon earth's noonward height
> To feel the always coming on
> The always rising of the night:
>
> To feel creep up the curving east
> The earthy chill of dusk and slow
> Upon those under lands the vast
> And ever climbing shadow grow
>
> . . . . . .
>
> And here face downward in the sun
> To feel how swift how secretly
> The shadow of the night comes on . . .

Miss Gillmor, who is concerned with the development of the poet, sees in the spatial concept a means for man to express the confrontation of "infinity with painful consciousness of himself." It is defined in Conquistador's geographical setting: "Something is likely to happen to the individual viewed against this backdrop of continent and interstellar

spaces. He is likely to shrink. ...Cosmically perceived, or continentally perceived, men and races become small."[47]

In "Einstein" the poet attempts to cope with his sense of infinity and express the question of man's meaning in a world where he can exist only in relationship with an environment only vaguely comprehended. Miss Gillmor agrees with the obvious conclusion that the result is still man against the backdrop of time and space, questioning. The same unresolved question was the result of the attempt to find an answer in the pattern of generations in "The Pot of Earth."[48] While the poet's questions were still unanswered in 1934, Miss Gillmor felt that MacLeish was moving further away from negation in urging hope for American democracy. This hope is seen in the increasing identification of the poet with the westward march "which has given the continent's sweep to our history and our consciousness."[49] It becomes, in its increase from "American Letter" to Frescoes for Mr. Rockefeller's City, a march of exploration, a symbol for social progress.[50]

A later critic, Dayton Kohler, also connects social progress and its attendant problems with MacLeish's development from concern with the individual to concern with the group.[51] Kohler wrote during the rise of nationalistic feeling just prior to America's involvement in World War Two. If the patriotic slant of his article be disregarded, his overall assertion that MacLeish speaks for his age and its problems becomes valid. Kohler believes that MacLeish's poetry

indicates three stages in his development: there was first a young poet's awareness of the natural world; secondly, a struggle for self identity; and finally a realization of the artist's "responsibility in a period of social collapse and decay of ancient faith."[52] To this critic, MacLeish's view of life has been in terms of conflict. Thus "The Hamlet" represents the early internal conflict, Conquistador the conflict of civilizations, and the public poems the conflict inherent in a world where man's freedom is threatened by mass politics and social upheaval. This latter conflict, according to Kohler, is MacLeish's moral subject, but in the issues of the class struggle MacLeish speaks "only for the common man in the inevitable drift of time. ...He carries no banner in the political parade."[53] Kohler's opinion is that the artist is no longer the creator of systems but their interpreter or critic; it is clear he approves MacLeish's public poetry because it deals in current problems having a distinctive "Americanism." This Americanism is, however, not the political kind but "the determination of a man to understand himself in his own time."[54] Kohler is thus able to identify MacLeish with the social situation: "As a poet MacLeish has shared the hopelessness and confusion of the

present age. Man has been challenged by the systems which he created... he must reaffirm the motive of his existence in the modern world."[55] That MacLeish faces this challenge is therefore for Kohler the justification of MacLeish.

MacLeish's handling of the social problems that beset mankind as World War Two approached was not universally approved. Edwin Honig was dissatisfied with the poet's application of the past. MacLeish did not, in his opinion, integrate poetic imagination with past history thereby evolving a poetic experience that has a socially applicable objective.[56] To Honig, the poetry of this period is document, not history, and therefore it fails to view history through imagination; poetry should not view history "as the subject of past experience in itself, but as the object for identifying a new experience whose inspiration is a present as real in predicament, yet whose proof and confirmation needs to be found in the past."[57] Because there seems in MacLeish's work to be no human justification for the sense of doom it embodies, the end result, particularly in Conquistador and the verse plays of the thirties, is to raise the magnitude of the original horror to an unreality. This unreality has no applicable

resolution. Because of its eclectic nature, MacLeish's work is, in Honig's opinion, symptomatic of the inconclusiveness pervading twentieth-century poetry. "It has led not only to the creation of a specialized craftsman's art, but has frozen the imagination on the plane of pure sensationalism and eclecticism; and in so doing it has denied the use of poetry as an historical instrument, or as a self-sustained human contribution to contemporary culture."[58] I believe Mr. Honig's complaint is based on the Marxian view that all efforts derive their value from their functional contribution to the attainment of an objective; thus the presentation of man's predicament both past and present in itself is not sufficient. This is Honig's analysis of the poetry he says MacLeish's typifies:[59]

> Almost nowhere has it realized the forms of historical materialism and the natural sciences as parallel manifestations of the poetic imagination working with the same contemporary materials in another context but in the same culture. In abusing or in outlawing completely the potentiality of historical consciousness and scientific investigation themselves as material for the poetic imagination, it has chained itself to the wheel of mystical or ideoloical prejudice and willful cultural dehumanization.

To Honig the poetry of MacLeish, and the other moderns, fails in fulfilling both its traditional historical role and its new unprecedented role which

is the recognition of "the reversability of poet into man of action. It is a subject that demands as high a degree of creative consciousness as Karl Marx gave it in the field of political economy or Einstein in the field of astro-physics."[60]

Both Kohler and Honig consider MacLeish's poetry as commentary on man in a period of social change. Kohler approves the poet's function as interpretive, stating for all men the problems they face. Honig disapproves because the poet does not go beyond the problems to extract applicable truths from poetic imagination.

IV

Each of the considerations of MacLeish's poetry thus far discussed has recognized that MacLeish has presented, in poetic terms the problem of man in the twentieth century. Most have also recognized that the rapid change in the social order and the equally rapid increase in scientific knowledge are responsible for that problem. But most have been content to deal with the presentation of the problem alone. In some instances the critics have attacked his work's for not providing a solution and yet themselves have not stated their own conception of the problem in the poetry they criticize. To state

a conception of the poetic problem underlying the work being criticized does not necessarily imply satisfaction with the poet's efforts, but it does give the criticism an aura of greater validity than commentary without such statement. Therefore the criticism of Dorothy Van Ghent, because it does examine the problem as well as the presentation is, in my opinion, important to the study of Archibald MacLeish.[61]

Miss Van Ghent, in surveying MacLeish's work up to 1938, finds that the central weakness in his poetry is the very nature of the problem itself. Further, she sees essentially the same problem being grappled with in both the early personal poems and the later social poems and plays. She takes the position that "poetry and drama cannot exist persuasively to the imagination if they are constituted by elements one of which is definitely inhuman." By this statement Miss Van Ghent means that the opposing parts of the problem consist of man on one hand and on the other "an element that is not susceptible of intellectual certainty."[62] This second part of the problem, in various forms, is present as a poetic fact in all MacLeish's works. Miss Van Ghent's explanation of MacLeish's poetic problem can be

summed up by considering her examinations of some major works. In "Einstein" the element is the universe itself; to her the inability of the scientist to resolve the universe to finite terms is a statement of "the epistemological basis of MacLeish's earlier work."[63] This basis lies in the fact that nature is unknowable except by revelation and that it is discontinuous with man. Thus "The Pot of Earth" also presents the conflict; here it is in the consciousness of the girl "between the principle of physical growth and a senseless mechanical principle which circulates in vast proportions around the growing thing like a Primum Mobile." The poetry consists in the questioning of the meaning of consciousness. In "The Hamlet" Miss Van Ghent finds the same conflict; in this instance Hamlet, like the girl and Einstein, has a "formidable sense of conscious existence, and at the same time, of being victimized by an 'in-decipherable will.'"[64] In "You, Andrew Marvell," geography is only the apparent cause of the feeling of being alone; the feeling, as presented, is really causeless.

The presence of this undecipherable will is the reason, according to Miss Van Ghent, that the

historically minded reader is dissatisfied with Conquistador. For example, the final massacre is not really perpetrated by the Spaniards but by "the shadow of terror;" the reference to the "cloud out of the north-east" as a causative element is almost mystical. "Naturally," Miss Van Ghent writes, "in a system so constituted ... mysterious pressures are necessary to make things happen."[65] The poet writes in terms of incipient solipsism; the man against the stars, for example Hamlet, has no one to engage with except the stars, and they refuse to act. "Hence no action is possible except the passive action of sensation. And no judgement."[66] Is Miss Van Ghent saying that MacLeish's problem is the opposition of irreconcilable orders? Positively, and in fact this opposition is present also both in his poetry and in his drama on topical matters; it is the indecipherable force in different guises. In commenting on the poems in Public Speech, she writes: "It is evident that this measure of brotherhood in truth is simply a transposition to flat collectivity of Hamlet's suffering."[67] In Panic the fateful element exists in the economic cycle; in The Fall of the City it is the evil of Fascism which comes like "babies out of nowhere into the here." In these two works also, Miss Van Ghent sees philosophic consistency since it is the group which is "at the mercy of inhuman and fateful elements."[68] In Land of the Free she finds that the place of Fate and metaphysics in MacLeish's poetry has been superceded by

people, but she reserves final judgment on whether he has relinquished the concept of human experience as passive suffering in favor of volitional human activity.[69]

It is clear that Miss Van Ghent does not approve of the failure of resolution in MacLeish's poetry, but she recognizes that the problem as presented is one which cannot be resolved because of the inherent dichotomy of its elements. In her identification of the opposition between man and an indecipherable will can be seen another possible poetic truth that has conferred longevity on MacLeish's poetry. To the poetry-reader of the Thirties, the inhuman and fateful elements of the poems were perhaps a representation of the powers then wielding control over human destiny. He saw the suffering of innocents in the great depression, and the drift towards war in Europe (war had begun in Asia in 1934). The reader undoubtedly was aware of the helplessness of the individual in the face of forces he could not combat or in some cases even comprehend.

The critical interpretations outlined above are representative of the bulk of MacLeishian criticism. There are those who find his poetry to be merely recitation of emotional stimuli and hence meaningless beyond the capturing of sensual experience. There are also those who see in MacLeish an effort to present the situation of man in his total environment and believe that the lack of resolution is justified because in the environment there is no resolution.

These critics see the problem in terms of the effect of the environment, cosmic or social, on man, individual or collective. One, Hyatt Waggoner, has gone a step further and attempted to find, in MacLeish's works, the causative factor of the environmental condition. Though many readers of MacLeish's poetry recognize the emotional content and others may identify in their own situation the elements of the poetic problem we have been discussing, few will analyze it in detail as has Waggoner.

Mr. Waggoner has twice published examinations of MacLeish's poetry.[70] In both he found that after one has recognized the influence of the after-effects of World War One, the symbolists, and the ideology of the French Decadents, one will find that the principal source of MacLeish's ideas and point of view is not in these but in the scientific outlook of the twenties. The impact on man of the special and general theories of relativity and his realization that the Universe is slowing down or cooling off, indicating the ultimate lifelessness of all sensible nature in maximum entropy, form the components of MacLeish's poetic sensibility. He has not written just about relativity, says Waggoner; he has assimilated "the resulting new conception of time and space, the disappearance of scientific authority for any conception of the universe which could be represented by a mechanical model, the realization that 'matter' and 'energy' are interchangeable variants of the same mysterious force."[71]

To this scholar the sense of time and space and time-space becomes, in MacLeish's poetry, a sense of infinity which has a dual manifestation. It is "first of all physical, an awareness of time, of space, of man's position on the planet; and then since man is a spirit as well as a creature, it is a sense both human and spiritual."[72] Waggoner feels that by symbolic transformation, MacLeish makes the physical facts of man's position on the planet and his motion through space into spiritual facts. He must do this because the beliefs that once served poets are gone and there are left the facts, theories, and hypotheses of science. In his first consideration of MacLeish, Waggoner feels that the search for an image to unite the dichotomy between man and this newly understood, but not comprehended, universe is admirable. In the second he expresses dissatisfaction with the continued lack of solution. He claims that, since MacLeish appears to have no other ground for the new image except the will to believe, the result is the poet's turn to social themes and "what seems like a deterioration of his poetic powers."[73] In both commentaries the concept of MacLeish's searching for a metaphysical system to produce the needed image is the same. It is Waggoner's belief that MacLeish has not found a system adequate to the needs of his vision: to clarify the "life of man as seen both in time and in eternity."[74] This search manifests itself especially in "The Hamlet of A. MacLeish":

> Born, mortal men and haunted with brief days,
> Their eyes to that vast silence overhead.
> They see the moon walk slowly in her ways
> And the grave stars and all the dark outspread.
> They raise their mortal eyelids from this ground:
> Question it...
> What art thou...
> And no sound.[75]

The man-versus - cosmic-vastness motif develops further in "Einstein," where, according to Waggoner, MacLeish almost reaches a solution for man facing tne fact that here is a vast difference between what he knows and what is known. The same is true of "Epistle To Be Left in the Earth"; in this poem MacLeish emphasizes a dichotomy which is "so apparent that the end of Man's quest for ultimate meaning must be acknowledgement of mystery."[76] Waggoner finds MacLeish's dilemma in the vast knowledge man is made aware of through the efforts of modern science; it is this knowledge that creates the problem of "the place of man and his mind in nature.[77] This realization that the reason for man's existence is questionable is expressed for Waggoner in "Lines for a Prologue":[78]

> Those alternate nights and days, these seasons
> Somehow fail to convince me. It seems
> I have the sense of infinity!

The poet's sensibility is exemplified in the phrase "the sense of infinity!" Waggoner says that, rather than leading to a faith, pessimism, or mysticism, all of which are positive, at least for those who accept them, the problem has led MacLeish "simply to a new perspective accompanied by no

dogmatic faith, supersensate philosophy, or genuinely religious mysticism."[79] Conquistador is, in this manner of interpretation, an attempt to tell "a story of human events in time from the point of view of an observer who is aware of eternity." This sense is present in Bernal Diaz because he isaware of the approach of death. He is aware preternaturally not only of the living reality of the events in the past, but also of the ephemeral nature of the very sensations that are remembered. He may be acutely conscious of the dilemma at the heart of modern thought: "fleeting, transitory, insubstantial consciousness seems at one the only indisputable reality and a flickering light in the darkness of cosmic space." Thus it is that the sensations which are the subject matter of Conquistador took place in time but are seen out of time. "The reader never is allowed to forget... that while the men march the earth turns on its axis and circles the sun, and both speed through the darkness of the galaxy among galaxies." The poem raises a question but does not answer it: "how the experience of the Conquerors and the external universe in which it takes place can be made to fit into a coherent whole -- is left unanswered."[80] This is the answer Waggoner says MacLeish is seeking and has not found: an image that will conjoin the finite and the infinite.

I noted earlier that Waggoner was less favorable to MacLeish's lack of resolution in his second article; we

can see the shift in opinion most clearly in his consideration of Conquistador. The 1950 reappraisal of Conquistador is essentially made in the light of the same search by MacLeish and it is adjudged unsuccessful.[81] The critic no longer believes that it is enough merely to state the problem; he calls the poem "another revelation of nothing." It has, in his words, "motion without direction, passion without purpose, sensation without meaning." In Waggoner's new reading, it is a parable expressing an indictment of contemporary life and as such is less than successful. To be a successful parable, he says, it needs to be either recognizably particularized or based on archetypal myths.[82] If the work is judgment, it lacks all standards, religious, humanistic, or even anti-humanistic, by which meaningful judgments can be made. Because "Conquistador is about the whole life of man it fails." The lack of resolution is unsatisfactory because man's life "is more than physical and must be judged by standards and seen from perspectives more complicated than the astronomical."[83]

That MacLeish presented a vision of the world Waggoner admits, but the vision had still not solidified; in the more recent poetry it remains "a shadowy something" when the poet turns to poems of social conscience and current topics. This lack of solidification is what prompted the unfavorable comments in the critic's second evaluation. In Waggoner's view, the vision of MacLeish is helpfully destructive but

fails to replace that which it destroys: "The vision of reality found in Mr. MacLeish's poems is like a part of the vision of historic Christianity in that it is calculated to destroy pretensions -- those of philosophic idealism and those of rationalism, those of scientific positivism and those of bourgeois optimism equally. And it does so in somewhat the same fashion, by enlarging man's perspective more than it is comfortable to have it enlarged. A firm grasp of the realities of time and space is incompatible with complacency."[84] Although there is much in the spirit of the age to prevent the formulation of an intellectual truth or moral law to replace that which has been destroyed, Waggoner finds nothing in science or in MacLeish's poems to prevent its development; yet it has not materialized (in 1950) beyond the will to believe. This as far as Waggoner's examination goes. But it, like all the criticism discussed in this chapter is limited by the fact that MacLeish, after their studies, is to have more to say. Since these searching examinations by Waggoner appeared, MacLeish has published several works in which he does propose a replacement for that which his vision destroyed. In a sense these more recent works also echo historic Christianity since they draw on its Judaic base in the Bible's Old Testament stories. I believe that these later works are not a change in subject matter but rather an attempt to solve the problem of man, not in terms of science, economics, or history, but in faith. Further, they are

continuous in technique and philosophy with the earlier poetry.

V

Stated or implied in most appraisals of MacLeish's poetry is the assertion that his best work is to be found most often in the early, intensely personal peoms, mainly those written before 1933. The recent favorable reviews of Songs for Eve,[85] which return in form and subject to that earlier poetry, emphasize the critical approval of MacLeish's short lyrical works. One need only to quote from "The Infinite Reason"[86] to demonstrate the similarity:

(3)

Miser of meanings in the stars, O man

Who finds the poem moonlight has forgotten!
Eternity is what our wanderers gather,
Image by image, out of time -- the cut

Branch that flowers in the bowl. Our father,
Thou who ever shalt be, the poor body
Dying at every ditch hath borne Thee, Father.

But the echoes of the earlier consciousness of man against the stars now conjoin with a theological solution which, as we shall see in the next chapter, finds that in part, the meaning of man's existence is the Almighty's need for humanity.

(4)

Our human part is to redeem the god
Drowned in this time of space, this space
That time encloses.

From the Tyrrhenian flood

The floated marble, the cold human face!

Recall the problem as it was defined by Dorothy Van Ghent, the position of man victimized by an indecipherable will. Consider Hyatt Waggoner's belief that MacLeish had not found a system to clarify life as seen in time and simultaneously in eternity. The poet now appears to have found the answer in a personal interpretation of the God-man relationship described in the Bible. In Songs for Eve, as demonstrated above,[87] the earlier questioning is combined, with a theological vision. The academicians have not yet subjected these recent poems to the same scrutiny the earlier have suffered; when they do, it will be clear that MacLeish has at last offered a solution. Whether or not it is a satisfactory solution to the dilemma the poet himself presented remains to be seen. The determination of its validity must await the detachment that the passage of time provides. But at least one critic has discerned a meaning in Songs for Eve which implies the final resolution to be offered by MacLeish in J.B..

Sarah Hay's explanation of the theme establishes the first stage of the resolution which future scholars will undoubtedly discuss, interpret, and evaluate: "The basic theme of the sequence of twenty-eight lyrics which give the volume its title is that the cataclysmic Fall, deliberately engineered by Eve, was not a fall from Divinity but rather to it; the fall from earth to God, from the browsing contented animal of somnolent Eden to the soaring of the soul. Man's

exile from Eden is his blessing, not in disguise, but to be seen and exulted in; his awakening to his own dignity and destiny as the builder of Eternity."[88]

This interpretation is supported by these lines from "Eve in the Dawn":[89]

> Look! he said, your eyes that see
> My eyes have images of me!
>
> That night until the next of day
> We touched in love and loving lay:
>
> We were awake then who had slept.
> Out bodies out of Eden leapt
>
> Together to a lifted place
> Past space of time and time of space
>
> That neither space nor time had made.
> There first we laughed, were first afraid.
>
> Was it Adam, only he,
> Bred that flowering branch of me
> Whereon shall hang eternity?

If we accept, and I think we must, Sarah Hay's reading of the volume, we see in the lines above not only the echo of past questions ("space of time and time of space") but also implications of the solution MacLeish is to offer in J.B., human love, expressed symbolically by a flower and within the framework of an Old Testament event. J.B. explicitly states that the means for "the builder of Eternity" is love. In Songs of Eve we find an initial statement of MacLeish's concept of this love in "Adam in the Evening":[90]

> That distance in the blood
> Whereby the eyes have sight
> Is love -- not understood
> But infinite.

In my opinion, many critics have failed to recognize, in J.B., love as MacLeish's solution to the problem of Man (or mankind) against the stars because as yet they have not seen the resolution of theplay in terms of this total problem. In other words, the play has been evaluated in terms of the solution it offers to the problem the critics see in the play. Often this problem is considered vis-a-vis the plays Biblical source. Such judgment is certainly valid in terms of dramatic criticism. However, I believe that the critics have obscured their own analysis by failing to realize that the resolution is that of J.B., a modern Job beset by the problem MacLeish has been presenting for over thirty years, not the problem of Job as it appears in traditional Biblical interpretation.

It appears that to many, an important question about the play is whether or not J.B is truly Job. A question that has raised controversy obscuring, in my opinion, the obvious relationship of the play to the earlier works. Theological critics have added to the obscurity by expounding on what they believe to be improper deviations, in the play, from the usual interpretations of the Book of Job. In the next chapter I will examine some criticism of J.B. which exemplifies and contributes to this obscurity.

CHAPTER THREE

Criticism of J.B.

The resolution that MacLeish offers in J.B. is the answer of a humanist to the problem of mankind versus its environment. And because the solution to man's existence is presented in the play as being within the capability of man unaided, directly, by the Deity, it has generated much criticism related to the humanist -- theist discussion. A good deal of the dissatisfaction expressed over J.B. is in truth directedat a concept of humanism that critics feel the play improperly proposes as a philosophy for the age. After more than thirty years of poetic investigation of the problem of man's position vis-a-vis the infinite powers that affect him, it is not surprising that MacLeish should arrive at this humanist solution. In the play, the basic philosophical problem is the same as that in his early poetry; J.B., facing the inexplicable catastrophies that overtake him asks the same question of cause that "The Hamlet of A. MacLeish" asked. Where Hamlet questioned a silent universe, J.B. questions the Deity. The universe within which J.B. suffers his apparently unjustified afflictions is the universe MacLeish presented years previously in "The End of The World," the image of the big top. The unascertained nature of the universe's driving force is the mystery underlying the opening of the play. The principal

characters, J. B. and his wife, Sarah, have different conceptions of God. Here again is the ignorance of the Deity's true nature that was expressed in the earlier "Epistle To Be Left in the Earth." True, it is more subtle, but nevertheless, it is again the realization that "Also none among us has seen God."

For the purpose of discussion, let us consider J.B. to be the same poetic voice that in the earlier works queried the universe for an explanation of how man is to exist compatibly with an infinite environment. It can be seen that the answer in the play is consistent with the investigation. MacLeish's poetic voice has always asked: Where in the vastness is the answer? The answer always escaped perception prior to J.B.. Here the author provides an answer and it is that the solution is not to be found in the vastness; it is the vastness itself. The vastness, the manifestation of the Deity, permits man to exist; the philosophic basis of for existence is, however, man's problem, not the Deity's, and man's means for existence, the play declares, is human love.

I

The controversy inherent in a literary work dealing with such matters is compounded in the case of J.B. because the author has used as his source the story of Job. MacLeish presents his humanistic solution in the framework of a story

usually interpreted as supporting the traditional Judeo-Christian view of mankind's position in relation to the Deity. Thus it is that many critics cannot decide whether or not it is a religious play; if it is, is it a reaffirmation or a repudiation of traditional Biblical teaching? If it is not a religious play what is the purpose of using the plot, names, and even some of the verses of the Biblical story? A reading of the play reveals that a black-or-white alternative is not offered; the play cannot be relegated to a specific genre and then judged accordingly against an established set of criteria.

The study of MacLeish's play and the criticism of it is complicated by the varying interpretations of the story of Job by theological scholars, and also by an interpretation of that story which MacLeish himself has published in several periodicals; notable among these is an article in The Christian Century.[1] Critics have assumed a position on one of the traditional interpretations of the source and then judged the play's resolution thereby; others have judged MacLeish's separate (from the play) interpretation by the same criteria. And still others deal at the same time with both the play and the separately published interpretation of the Biblical story. The complication arises partly because there is an important difference between the play and the prose interpretation of the source, a difference which I shall bring out later.

In the matter of the Biblical Job, it is clear that MacLeish has followed at least the basic story. That he has changed the specifics is also obvious. He has done so because of his personal view that the story fits modern man. In one place he says, "I badly needed an ancient structure on which to build the contemporary play....and the structure of the poem of Job is the only one I know of which our modern history will fit."[2] Biblical scholars agree that the story of Job is really the efforts of at least two authors, perhaps of more, for it is clear that, in character, there is more than one Job. There is initially the devout, sinless desert nomad upon whom the Deity allows the calamities to descend in order to demonstrate to a demonic adversary the loyalty of his subject. This patient and suffering Job remains steadfast in his faith. He is rewarded for his piety and devotion by restoration of his worldly goods and increased prosperity. Into this elementary tale was introduced the great debate in which Job discusses with philosophers the problems of evil and the mystery of man's suffering. The debating Job is not the simple shepherd, patient and submissive, but rather an upright man convinced of his own rightousness and integrity. But, this second Job is not the Job of the resolution in the Bible; the final Job is an awed penitent who has been overwhelmed by the speeches of the Lord which bring him to a sense of his own littleness and ignorance in the face of the Almighty. However, despite the character differences, the

story line is essentially continuous, and MacLeish has followed it more or less faithfully. The central character of the play, J.B., cannot, however, be faithfully a modern version of all three Jobs without losing dramatic credibility, and herein lies another source of critical variance. If a critic examines MacLeish's play in terms of its source, which Job is to provide guidance for man's reaction to adversity? It is probable that had MacLeish based J.B. solely on any one of the Biblical Jobs there would be advocates of another in disagreement. I believe the J.B. of the play is none of the Jobs of the Bible but a twentieth-century man similarly beset by afflictions, and that MacLeish's J.B. is not the biblical story of Job modernized, but the story of a modern Job. In the following summary of the play, I have included MacLeish's prose commentary on the Book of Job as a possible aid to clarifying the critical remarks cited later in sections III and IV.

II

The setting is late at night in a corner of a circus tent. Two vendors, old actors, are unable to resist the opportunity to perform the play of Job. Mr. Zuss, balloon-vendor, casts himself in the role of God; Mr. Nickles, the popcorn-vendor, plays Satan. They play the dual roles throughout the drama: as themselves, they comment on the play's action in the

manner of a Greek chorus, and, wearing the masks of God and Satan, they read the Biblical lines of the story. For the main role, they say there are millions of Jobs available; they have only to speak the cues one of them will appear:3

> Millions and millions of mankind,
> Burned, crushed, broken, mutilated,
> Slaughtered, and for what? For thinking!
> For walking round the world in the wrong
> Skin, the wrong-shaped noses, eyelids:
> Sleeping the wrong night wrong city--
> London, Dresden, Hiroshima.
> There never could have been so many
> Suffered more for less.
> . . . . . .
> Job is everywhere we go,
> His children dead, his work for nothing,
> . . . . . .
> Questioning everything -- the times, the stars,
> His own soul, God's providence. (pp.12-13)

In one essay MacLeish wrote, "Men, our own contemporaries, have already sat as Job did on an earth reduced to ash-heap, picking in agony at the cinders of a bombscorched skin, asking Job's eternal question. We know that they have sat there. We know that we may sit there too."[4] The connection between the contemporary situation and the Biblical drama which serves as dramatic vehicle is exemplified at the end of the Prologue when the two vendors don their masks and speak the cues that begin the play within the play:

> Godmask: Whence comest thou?
> Satanmask: From going to and fro in the earth...
> A choked silence.

And from walking up and down in it.

Godmask: Hast thou considered my servant Job
That there is none like him on the earth
A perfect and an upright man, one
That feareth God and escheweth evil? (p.24)

Then appear on the stage J.B. and his family at Thanksgiving dinner. Misfortune has not yet overtaken them. The speeches of J.B. and Sarah express two views of God. To Sarah He is the Hebraic God of justice who rewards the deserving and punishes the undeserving; to J.B. He is a sensed presence; the Divine Justice is in God's unchangeableness not in moral judgments.

Sarah: Not even now when suddenly everything
Fills to overflowing in me
Brimming the fulness till I feel
My happiness impending like a danger.
If ever anyone deserved it, you do.

. . . . . .

J.B.: Nobody deserves it, Sarah:
Not the world that God has given us.

There is a moment's strained silence, then J.B. is laughing.

J.B.: But I believe in it, Sal. I trust in it.
I trust my luck--my life--our life--
God's goodness to me.

Sarah: trying to control her voice Yes! You do!
I know you do! And that's what frightens me!
It's not so simple as all that. It's not.
They mustn't think it is. God punishes.
God rewards and God can punish.
God is just.

J.B.: easy again Of course He's just.
He'll never change. A man can count on Him.

. . . . . .

J.B.: Eat your dinner, Sal my darling.

We love our life because it's good:
It isn't good because we love it --
Pay for it--in thanks or prayers. The thanks are
Part of love and paid like love:
Free gift or not worth having. (pp. 38-40)

J.B. is the man to be put to the test. Mr. Zuss says, "Well, that's our pigeon." Nickles replies, "Lousy actor." Zuss sets the tone for what is to occur: "Doesn't really act at all." (p.44) Will J.B. act like the Biblical Job? Nickles does not think so:

All that gravy on his plate--
His cash--his pretty wife--his children!
Lift the lot of them, he'd sing
Another canticle to different music. (p.46)

But Zuss maintains that his reverence will be steadfast and insists that God will teach him to realize the power of God:

God will show him what God <u>is</u> --
Enormous pattern of the steep of stars,
Minute perfection of the frozen crystal,
Inimitable architecture of the slow,
Cold, silent, ignorant sea-snail: (pp. 47-48)

Mr. Zuss proclaims that nothing J.B. might suffer will prevent him from praising God. Then Nickles wants to know, "Why must he suffer then?" Zuss replies, "To praise!" (p.48). Nickles claims that J.B. under the calamities will wish for death. Zuss and Nickles establish the same conditions for the test as the Biblical story: all that is J.B.'s is in Nickle's power except that to the man himself no death shall come by the

adversary's hand. To MacLeish these are "the essential preconditions to the dramatic action" in the story of Job.[5] The delivering of Job into the hands of Satan is done with God's consent; this means that the afflictions that are to be visited on Job (J.B.) are without cause, and so they are unfathomable to the human rationale. "God recognizes from the beginning that they are unjustified by any guilt of Job's."[6]

The calamities come in rapid succession; they are modern afflictions. In their totality they are tremendous, but in their specifics they are credible. First, J.B.'s son, a soldier in a world war that has just ended, is killed as the result of a stupid order. Then another son and a daughter are killed in an automobile accident. The youngest girl in the family is murdered by a rapist "hopped to the eyes," and finally the Bomb levels all of J.B.'s banks and factories, burying, somewhere in the rubble, Ruth, the last of the children. Sarah's vision of God has been destroyed; from the just Deity has come affliction without cause. J.B. retains his faith in his concept of God:

J.B.: Do not let my hand go, Sarah!
Say it after me:
The Lord
Giveth...Say it.

Sarah: mechanically The Lord giveth.

J.B. The Lord taketh away...

Sarah: flinging his hand from hers, shrieking
Takes!
Kills! Kills! Kills! Kills!
Silence.

J.B.: Blessed be the name of the Lord. (pp.89-90)

The philosophic basis of the dramatic conflict comes to the fore most clearly in Scene eight; at this point J.B. and Sarah face the awesome problem that presents itself when they attempt to reconcile their fate with their concept of justice. And it should be pointed out before going further, that MacLeish does not intend that there be a reconciliation in terms of the human conception of justice. In one explanation of the play he wrote that "Job's search, like ours, was for the meaning of his afflictions...and his destruction was by the same unquestionable authority, 'without cause.'" 7 In explaining his interpretation of the Book of Job on this matter, MacLeish wrote, "Job's sufferings are unjustified. They are unjustified in any human meaning of the word justice. And yet they are God's work--work that could not have been done without the will of God."8

Sarah sees the injustice of God in the death of her children; for if God were good and just, then

the children must have been guilty. Her own memories and everything decent in her argue that they were innocent; if they were, then God is unjust. J. B. does not understand:

> His will is everywhere against us --
> Even in our sleep, our dreams...
> . . . . . .
> If I
> Knew. . . If I knew why!
> . . . . . .
> God will not punish without cause.

Nickles doubles up in a spasm of soundless laughter.

J. B.: God is just.

Sarah: hysterically God is just!
If God is just our slaughtered children
Stank with sin, were totten with it! (pp.108-109)

To Sarah, J. B.'s insistence that there must be a guilt is wrong. To keep his concept of God, in Sarah's eyes, J.B. has to falsify himself and his children:

> I will not stay here if you lie--
> Connive in your destruction, cringe to it:
> Not if you betray my children...
>
> I will not stay to listen...
>
> They are
> Dead and they were innocent: I will not
> Let you sacrifice their deaths
> To make injustice justice and God good! (p. 110)

J. B cannot accept Sarah's viewpoint, for the conclusion it inevitably points to is an admission of innocent suffereing in the world. This would banish his God from it or at the least question His basic goodness:

> We have no choice but to be guilty.

God is unthinkable if we are innocent. (p.111)

To Sarah there is a choice, the choice between life and death. She says it: "curse God and die..." (p.110). When J.B. refuses to accept this solution, she runs out to find death in the waters. And then the Comforters appear. They are modern Comforters with modern answers because, said MacLeish, "Where Job's comforters undertook to persuade him against the evidence of his inner convictions, that he WAS guilty, ours attempt to persuade us that we are not--that we cannot be--that, for physchological reasons or because everything is determined in advance by economic necessity anyway, or because we were damned before we started, guilt is impossible. ... If we cannot even be guilty then there are no reasons."[9]

The modern Comforters are Zophar the cleric, Eliphaz the scientist, and Bildad the Marxist. J.B. has stated that death cannot heal him and has appealed to God to know what he has done. The Comforters reply:

Zophar: Why should God reply to <u>you</u>
From the blue depths of His Eternity?

Eliphaz: Blind depths of His Unconsciousness?

Bildad: Blank depths of His Necessity?

Zopnar: God is far above in Mystery.

Eliphaz: God is far below in mindlessness.

Bildad: God is far within in History --
Why should God have time for you? (p. 119)

J.B. protests that he has been touched by the hand of God, and he is innocent. Bildad answers:

> God is History. If you offend him
> Will not History dispense with you?
> History has no time for innocence. (p. 120)

When J.B. protests that unless there is guilt the whole world is meaningless, Bildad replies:

> Guilt is a socialogical accident:
> Wrong class -- wrong century --
> You pay for your luck with your licks, that's all.
> (p.121)

But Eliphaz has another explanation:

> Come! Come! Come! Guilt is a
> Psychophenomenal situation --
> . . . . . .
> Science knows now that the sentient spirit
> Floats like the chambered nautilus on a sea
> That drifts it under skies that drive:
> Beneath, the sea of the subconcious;
> Above the winds that wind the world.
> Caught between that sky. that sea,
> Self has no will, cannot be guilty. (p.122)

To J.B. this is defiling innocence; he cannot accept the placing of resposibility on an irresponsible arrogance. The cruelest comfort of all is that of Zophar. This Comforter proclaims the automatic guilt of all mankind. He calls J.B. to repent; J.B. protests that he cannot repent of sins he has not sinned and still retain his integrity. Zophar replies:

> Your integrity! Your integrity!
> What integrity have you? --
> A man, a miserable, mortal, sinful,
> Venal man like any other.
> . . . . . .
> Your sin is
> Simple. You were born a man! (p. 126)

J. B. cannot accept this idea, which makes God a "party to the crimes." He cries out the lines from the Bible:

> Oh, that I knew where I might find Him!--
> That I might come even to His seat!
> I would order my cause before Him
> And fill my mouth with arguments. (p. 128)

He is answered, as is the Biblican Job, out of the wind by the majestic voice of God:

> Gird up thy loins like a man:
> I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

J. B. pulls himself painfully to his knees.

> Wilt thou disannul my judgment? (p. 131)

J. B. then repents; he sees and admits the onmipotence of the Deity. In MacLeish's interpretation of the Book of Job, the biblical comforters tried to convince Job of his guilt but Job would not be satisfied because there had to be a justification for suffering. Therefore, even though he knows and fears God, he debates with Him. And God, said MacLeish, answers Job "by convicting him of his own insignificance!"[10] Thus MacLeish, in his play, changes the nature of the Comforters to purveyers of modern convictions and yet retains, in his interpretation, the Biblical version of the effect of God on Job.

In MacLeish's view of the Job story, God delivered J b into the hands of Satan not only to silence Satan. "God had need of the suffering of Job -- had need of it forhimself as God." Job loves God in spite of everything,

and in MacLeish's view this means that, "God stakes his supremacy as God on Man's fortitude and love." In the conflict between good and evil this is the point that Satan has brought into question; therefore, wrote MacLeish, "Where the nature of man is in question God <u>has need of man</u>." In the Job story MacLeish saw that, "Only man can prove that man loves God." Only by man's persistence in the love of God can Satan be overcome. While man depends on God for all things, God, according to MacLeish, depends on man for love. "Without man's love God does not exist as God, only as Creator." And God cannot command love. Acceptance of God's will is not enough; love of God inspite of everything "is the answer to our ancient cry against injustice."[11] This divine need, which MacLeish expressed after the publication of the play, is indicated in the dialogue of the vendors after J. B.'s encounter with the voice of God:

> Mr. Zuss: ...He'd heard of God and now he saw Him!
> Who's the judge in judgment there?
> Who play's the hero, God or him?
> Is God to be <u>forgiven</u>?
>
> Nickles: Isn't he?
>
> Job was innocent, you may remember...(p.140)

MacLeish as will be seen, resolves <u>J. B.</u> in love. In his explication of the Book of Job, MacLeish said of justice, "To speak of justice is to demand something for ourselves...to require that we be treated according to

our dues." But of love, however, "Love creates even God, for how else have we come to him any of us, but through love?" MacLeish in this interpretation conceived of love in a total sense; it encompassed both love of man for man and of man for God. "It is in man's love that God exists and triumphs: in man's love that life is beautiful: in man's love that the world's injustice is resolved. To hold together in our though these horrible opposites of good and evil which struggle in the world is to capable of life and only love will hold them so." Thus, in MacLeish's words, "Our labor always, like Job's is to learn through suffering to love."[12] Although his essay proclaims this love to be a God-to-man, as well as a man-to-man, relationship, this is not the theme in the resolution of J. B.. In the lines which follow note the explicit denial of Deistic love for man; this dialogue is the target of many critical attacks.

Sarah had gone out to find water under bridges; instead she found a sprig of forsythia pushing itself up through the ashes. The obvious message here is that no devastation is ever so complete as to obliterate all life; it will exist in some form. Sarah returns to J. B. to tell him about it and about the ashes; their reconciliation is the affirmation of human love:

J. B.: Curse God and die, you said to me.

Sarah: Yes.

<u>She looks up at him for the first time, then down again.</u>

You wanted justice, didn't you?
There isn't any. There's the world...

.....

J. B.: Why did you leave me alone?

Sarah: I loved you.
I couldn't help you anymore.
You wanted justice, and there was none--
Only love.

J. B.: He does not love. He Is.

Sarah: But we do. That's the wonder. (pp. 151-152)

They cling to each other at this point. Then come the lines that are consistently attacked by critics of the play:

J. B.: It's too dark to see,

Sarah: Then blow on the coal of the heart, my darling.

J. B.: The coal of the heart...

Sarah: It's all the light now.

<u>Sarah comes forward into the dim room, J. B. behind her. She lifts a fallen chair, sets it straight.</u>

Blow on the coal of the heart.
The candles in churches are out.
The lights have gone out in the sky.
Blow on the coal of the heart
And we'll see by and by... (pp. 152-153)

Thus ends the play. The mere reading of it raises in the mind of the reader controversial questions. The very

subject of J.B. is such that the play cannot be dealt with critically without consideration of its philosophical solution. The line between literary criticism and philosophical comment is often vague; in approaching J.B. it seems that often the critics have been unable to separate literary judgments from philosophical judgments. One critic who placed the greater emphasis on the play's literary value was John Ciardi who wrote two important articles about J.B.. That the articles differ in their evaluation of the play is to be expected; J.B. deals in matter that have perplexed man for ages.

III

The enthusiasm of Ciardi's first response to the play is indicated by the title of his initial article, "The Birth of a Classic."[13] J.B., he writes "adds a dimension to the accomplishment of American Literature. We now have a great American poetic drama.[14] MacLeish has achieved the making of a "true poetic stage line for our times." Ciardi, himself a poet, writes that MacLeish's line meets the four basic requirements. It has range, the ability to speak the full scope of emotion; he says, "MacLeish's rangeis magnificent and unstrained." It is recognizably a line of poetry, because it responds to measure, is an irreducible statement, and is memorable and nervous,

suggesting sensation to the whole body. Third, the line is truly "a unit of the spoken language." Ciardi points out that languages have a tune to them which enables one to identify them on hearing without making out a single word. "The basic mark of mature achievement in American poetry of the twentieth century is the success of our poets in capturing the rhythms of the American voice box." Finally, says Ciardi, the line "must have a pace that works in the theatre." By this Ciardi means that the rate of saying must be equivalent to the rate of revelation to the listener. "The stage line must manage to offer the richness of true poetry at a pace which the ear can absorb." According to Ciardi's first article only MacLeish "has managed such a line in our time."[15]

In Ciardi's first consideration of J.B. he calls the play a triumph. The poetry and the drama "are organically one," and, again, "MacLeish's triumph is that he has been equal to his great theme."[16] Ciardi accepts the final humanistic position. He is satisfied with J.B.'s reclaiming himself from his losses in the name of human love. In the universe of the humanist there is only the choice between the void and "one another;" this is the lesson J.B. learns; to Ciardi, it is enough. This critic explains his view of how the great issues of life are successfully dramatized in the play:

"Massive as these themes are, the basic action of Job is the simplest sort of dramatic sequence. The man of all blessings becomes the man of all sufferings: only that. The sequence is as clear as an alphabet and the end foreknown. Only by placing that simple sequence within the framework of great concept can the Job theme rise to greatness. As a local drama of events Job is nothing: its stage must be no less than the spaces of the Universe held in the arch of Man's mind."17

In his first discussion of J. B., Ciardi feels it is too strong for Broadway: "And yet Broadway will come to it in time, because it must, because great imagination and great talent cannot be denied forever."18 J. B. did go to Broadway. There were some changes in the script. Two years after writing the remarks just summarized, Ciardi listened to a recording by the cast of the play. Although most critics agreed that the changes made for commercial production did not greatly affect the play's theme, Ciardi's reappraisal is less than happy.19

According to Ciardi's second article, from the point where God answers J. B. out of the wind "the action simply runs down." Ciardi still accepts the validity of the humanistic solution but claims, in this new analysis, that the title character fails to make him believe in it, because J. B. is a failure as a dramatic

character. What makes him thin, says Ciardi, "is that he could endure every conceivable suffering and never once realize...that he was in fact a fathead."[20] Because J.B. does not win from his sufferings a convincing enough self-realization, the enormous question the play dramatizes is not so deeply explored nor so firmly resolved as it could be. Ciardi claims, in his second evaluation of the play, that he does not clearly comprehend MacLeish's conception of J.B.'s God. In his first appraisal Ciardi, as has been noted, considered MacLeish's stage line an accomplished poetic fact; in the more recent view this evaluation is qualified: "MacLeish has gone further than any man of our times toward forging a true poetic line that works effectively on the stage."[21]

The poetic language of J.B. was not universally approved. For example Robert Brustein, in a generally unfavorable review of the play, said this: "Here his [MacLeish's] verse sounds like radio poetry, alternating between obsolete colloquialisms, doggerel rhyme, and high flown rhetoric, while the pithy language he has borrowed from the Book of Job only underlines the weakness of his own."[22] According to Marion Montgomery, there is a purpose

for the fluctuations of the play's verse.[23] The dialogue of the characters in J.B. reflects an attempt by MacLeish to match the verse to both the emotion and psychology of the personnel. Montgomery's thesis can be illustrated by the points he makes concerning the protagonist. J.B.'s intial speech is informal; the colloquial language suits a man who is happily secure in family and fortune. But J.B.'s language becomes more sober and progressively more dignified as the disasters overtake him, until finally, at the climax, he speaks with the painful dignity of the Old Testament words. An example of MacLeish's fitting the verse style to the emotional moment is to be found in scene four. After the reporters inform him that his son and daughter have been killed in an auto accident and Sarah has begun to question God's justice, J.B.'s lines have a choppy rhythm; the lines seem broken. They are no longer elliptical and colloquial. The reason for the change, says Montgomery, is that they "are intended to indicate doubt, the first wavering of J.B. as he attempts to deny an evil or indifferent God." After learning that his daughter has been raped and murdered, "The suffering J.B. has experienced has so changed him that he speaks in fragments,

clipped sentences as he wrestles to accept God's indifference."[24] Montgomery considers, however, that as J.B.'s lines progress from this point they become too rhetorical:

> God is God or we are nothing--
> Mayflies that leave their husks behind--
> Our tiny lives ridiculous--a suffering
> Not even sad that Someone Somewhere
> Laughs at us as we laugh at apes.
> We have no choice but to be guilty.
> God is unthinkable if we are innocent.
> (p.111)

This according to Montgomery, is MacLeish speaking rather than Job. "The rhetorical weakness makes J.B. seem to protest too much, to be less stricken than we want him to be."[25] Whether one agrees with Montgomery's opinion on the rhetoric or not, his analysis of the verse lines is a better supported argument than Brusstein's flat declaration. The alternation of the verse, of which the latter disapproves, is acceptable if one feels there needs to be a difference in speech characteristics of the dramatis personae corresponding to their different personalities.

In general, those who have approved of and complimented the work accept the irresolvable problem of the man-God relationship together with MacLeish's humanistic way out of the dilemma.

favorable criticism includes Brook's Atkinson's statement that "In its acceptance of the horrors of our century, in compassion for the characters," he finds it "a stirring work,"[26] and Dudley Fitts's "A passionate work, composed with great art; a philosophical poem." The conclusion, says Fitts, is "mystically right and dramatically no more improbable than that upon which it is modeled."[27] Even those in disagreement almost universally admire MacLeish's willingness to present the problem. They object mainly because he does not solve the problem in terms acceptable to them.

Adverse criticism of the play is often vague; for example, consider the review of Kenneth Tynan, who feels that the play is deficient because it does not have a character from a foreign culture.[28] In Tynan's view, the problem of Job's dilemma "is relevant only to a civilization that equates the Creator with the legislator." An Oriental figure, from a culture which separates the two functions, would clarify much, according to Tynan.[29] This critic, however, does not explain how the intervention of this alien character would accomplish the clarification he seems to feel is necessary.

In his review in <u>The New Yorker</u>, Mr. Tynan expresses

dissatisfaction at what he says is MacLeish's determination "to keep up, at all costs, the appearance of devotion to an antique and extravagant concept of the Deity."[30] It is obvious that this criticism is based on a desire that the play be contemporary not only to itself but also to reality. The trouble with this notion is that even theologians do not have concrete concepts of the Deity's nature; there are various views of the nature of the Deity just as there are various interpretations of the Bible to support them.

Much has been written about J.B. from the theological approach. The most persistent complaints are that MacLeish has not been faithful to the true theme of the Book of Job, that J.B. does not accurately represent a modernization of Job, and that the resolution of the play denies the traditional reliance on the morality imposed by the Christian-Judaic Deity. The charge that the play advocates nihilism is consistently invoked by those critics who reject, on religious grounds, the play's answer to the question of what is a basis for life:

> The candles in the churches are out.
> The lights have gone out in the sky.
> Blow on the coal of the heart
> And we'll see by and by... (p.153)

IV

Rabbi Herbert Weiner, authority on Israel and theological essayist, expresses typically the dissatisfaction that many critics find in the play's resolution, the final scene. In his essay on the Story of Job MacLeish writes of a positive relationship between human love and love of man for the Deity. In J.B., Weiner finds that the love MacLeish's characters embrace is completely secular with a negative relationship in its application to man's attitude towards the Deity. According to Weiner, the Judeo-Christian tradition turns to love in its efforts to understand the problem of human suffering. But, this "love as understood by this religious tradition is not the 'love' MacLeish speaks of."[31] It is that MacLeish has not given love its traditional scope: that is, love of man for God and love of man for man go together in the Judeo-Christian tradition. In J.B. MacLeish has blurred "the two-dimensional religious-human love relationship into a purely secular horizontal relationship."[32] Thus the play poses questions of a vertical nature, the man-God relationship, but resolves itself "with answers that have very little to do with the connection between man and God." The resolution of

the play is disappointing to Weiner because, although J.B's opening impact is forceful, like the Book of Job, it does not properly treat of the question of whether there is heart as well as power in the universe. "This question is resolved or flattened into a secular solution no different from the usual receipt for happiness offered in any number of best-seller psychological 'comforters' of our age."33 Although it would be repetitious to discuss all the commentaries that agree with Weiner, it may enlightning to consider the criticism of The Protestant theologian and author, Kenneth Hamilton, who terms the similarity to psychological best-sellers "romantic humanism."

Hamilton feels that not only has MacLeish produced a piece of literature but also " a vehicle for communicating a philosophy of life--a guided missile aimed at the target of our sensibilities."34 In J.B. "MacLeish has provided himself with a debating-floor on which to discuss the justification of the ways of God which is offered in the Book of Job." But Hamilton finds that MacLeish rejects the Biblical answer.35 In. J.B. Mr. Zuss is upset by the realization that the man has won a moral victory over God by not answering Him back; Nickles is rejected as

the "Uncreator and the non-sayer." Thus, says Hamilton, the values of romantic humanism are left. This set of values he explains, rejects the idea that the necessity for virtue exists in the very scheme of things. The denial of justice and temperance is not a denial of man's own nature. Romantic humanism "believes that in the last resort there is no justice, and that temperance can be a denial of life and not a rule for living if it happens to conflict with the heart's desire."[36] Hamilton interprets J.B. as a declaration that faith and hope do not abide but that human love compensates for their absence. He objects to the idea that the key to life is feeling.[37]

Like many critics of the play, Hamilton bases his argument, in part, on his own impression of the Biblical character of Job: "Now the whole point of the Book of Job is that Job is a complainer of the first magnitude who haunts the Complaints Department of the Universe and will not go away until he has had his case looked into by the head of the firm in person." In Hamilton's opinion J.B. is the Job of popular legend, not the Biblical Job, and MacLeish was misled into casting him in the role of patience "by a naive reliance upon

a few phrases from the King James Version." Hamilton also implies that MacLeish improperly relied on the King James Version since it has the "monumental mistranslation" of Job's speech of declaration, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Hamilton writes that it is clear from the context of the Book of Job "that Job is not saying 'I will be faithful whatever happens', but rather 'I will prove my point even if I must die in the process.'"[38] Thus the main character trait of Job was self-righteousness. Job was not concerned with making life bearable, which is the end result of J.B.'s situation, but rather he desires to know "how he stands in relationship to a living God when life is unbearable and yet must be endured." The problems of modern man drive towards the same area and focus on the issue Job knew as righteousness, but, says this critic, MacLeish's play ignores this fact; therefore the romantic humanism of J.B. does not come to grips with the religious realism in the Book of Job.[39]

The criticisms of Weiner and Hamilton both rely on interpretations of the Biblical Job which, in their opinions, the play deviates from; the resulting impression is that somehow the play fails

because in using the Book of Job as a vehicle it does not comply with the critic's view of the theological resolution contained therein. The critical view that MacLeish should have conformed to his source can be carried beyond comparative interpretations of the play to complaints embracing the total theological function of literature.

It was noted in the second chapter of this report that Edwin Honig disliked MacLeish's poetry because it did not, in his opinion, make a practical contribution in the social area. A similar complaint is made by some theologians in terms of J.B. and religosity. In employing the Book of Job as his source, MacLeish has taken a prechristian story and adapted the plot to modern conditions; one critical point of view, registered by several writers, is that it is improper for MacLeish to disregard the development over the ages of the Christian version of the meaning of the Old Testament. Christianity is basically a religion of comfort; it preaches that we endure in earthly life in order to be rewarded in eternal spiritual life. J.B. does not proclaim this message; therefore, in the eyes of some, it does perform its proper function. John McLaughlin charges that J.B. in its totality

"is subversive of the Christian principle... regrettably but unmistakably, anti-supernatural." MacLeish has "dispensed with God" and implemented human love, symbolized by the sprig of forsythia, as a substitute.[40] Although the need for conciseness prohibits a detailed account here of all who agree with this attack on the play, examination of an article by the eminent Catholic philosopher Martin C. D'Arcy will illustrate the approach of those who feel the drama must conform to orthodoxy in order to resolve its own problem successfully.

In his essay entitled, "J.B., Wrong Answer to the Problem of Evil,"[41] D'Arcy invokes St. Paul, Newman, and St. Augustine to illustrate that the solution to J.B.'s problem must come from outside man. Thus the resolution of MacLeish's play, relying on the inherent ability of man to love man, is unacceptable. To D'Arcy, the problem of evil was not disposed of when God spoke to Job out of the whirlwind. He questions the possibility of solving the problem of why man suffers unjustly in terms compatible with human reason. The Bible story ends inconclusively, and "it may well be that the ending is meant to serve as a warning to those who presume to bring God into court. They may not

be capable of appreciating divine acts."[42] The point of the story, according to D'Arcy is "that man is unfit, as a creature and as imperfect in mind and will, to comprehend the workings of Providence."[43] Truth and humility are inseparable. Since Job was written when the Jewish belief in immortality was dim, its solution emphasizes the concept of earthly reward for being good. But, says this critic, the fact of immortality and the figure of Christ's crucifixion change the terms of the discussion of evil, and by ignoring these, MacLeish prepares for "inevitable defeat."[44] D'Arcy finds that the horrors visited upon J.B. defy temporal answer and that MacLeish should have availed himself of immortality and of Christianity for a meaning. Instead, he writes, "he seems to be scoffing at such types of answers in many passages." The vestments lying around the stage as dressing are evidence that MacLeish takes a harsh view of God's representatives.[45]

The reaction of J.B. to the answer of Zophar, the extreme reforming Christian, is a rejection of Calvinistic doctrine, but, says D'Arcy, MacLeish misses the basic appeal of Calvinism, which is that God's thoughts are not as human thoughts;

God's ways are unsearchable. "This sense of the infinite majesty of God and our nothingness in comparison is the beginning of wisdom, and unfortun tely MacLeish does not seem to have the glimmering of an idea of this."[46]

D'Arcy interprets MacLeish's play as meaning that it is useless to call on divine love or justice but that human love is enough to compensate for their absence, a reading similar to Hamilton's. MacLeish has read this idea into the Job story says D'Arcy; he interprets MacLeish's viewpoint as a rejection of the Jobian author's solution that the lightening of the heart comes from the knowledge of innocence received from God and the immense relief attendant thereon. "Job recognized that his poor finite judgments were at fault; he saw too, that suffering does not necessarily mean that sin has preceded it, that God is punishing an offense against him."[47] Our distress at evil, comes from a desire to know that God has triumphed over Satan. "Christianity can go further and see in immortality and in the Cross the triumph of love."[48] The crucial line of the play, in D'Arcy's opinion, is "He does not love. He is. But we do. That's the

wonder." Here he feels MacLeish has rejected the Christian reliance on God.

Up to this point it is possible to accept D'Arcy's analysis as a valid theological objection to the theme of the play. As a religious reaction to drama, one can accept or reject, according to belief, its insistence on Christian view. But D'Arcy's final objection to J.B. brings into consideration not the theological belief, which is essentially a matter of philosophical opinion, but rather the role of drama itself. For he implies a need for a message applicable beyond the bounds of drama. His objection to J.B.'s resolution is like Honig's to Conquistador in the implication that the literary work must contribute beyond its own context. D'Arcy writes: "The jingle, 'we must blow on the coal of the heart... and we'll see by and by...' may soothe an audience at a play, but it holds out no hope for the future, nor does it affect the past nor the present. It could have brought no relief to the victims or survivors of Hiroshima or those who suffered in or by the gas chambers of Auschwitz."[49]

As Section IV of my bibliography shows, the critics reported on thus far are not alone in their

objections to the play's non-conformity with established theological-philosophical concepts of the man-God relationship. I have selected them for discussion because Weiner, Hamilton, and D'Arcy have cited the main objections of those who are unfavorable to the play for theological reasons; others expand on their points. For example, there is Charles M. Bond, who devotes an entire article to explaining why "J.B. is not Job."[50] Not all object to MacLeish's version of the Job story; Henry Van Dusen, even before D'Arcy had written his objections, made it plain that in his view if there are weaknesses in J.B., they result not because there is deviation from the Biblical tale but rather because there is fidelity to it.[51]

If MacLeish has transposed the Book of Job into modern realities, the problem he faces is imposed by "the guardians of the Bible, the scholars and interpreters who have foisted on generations of devout and credulous readers the belief that the Book of Job is a book." The two prose sections of Job which inclose the poem contradict the poem and go far to negate its message. If the restoration of J.B.'s worldly goods is a weakness in the play, it is so in its model. The

poem itself is full of abiguities aside from the contradictions imposed by the prose sections. Therefore, argues Van Dusen, there is no single accepted understanding of the poem: "As a matter of fact, there is hardly a story in the Bible which has been more disputed by equally learned scholars." Thus a charge that J.B. is not faithful to his Biblical prototype must be based on the critic's version of the Job story and not on an absolute standard. Van Dusen feels that the calamities that befall Job in the Bible story test credence but that the modern calamities that MacLeish imposes on J.B. are credible. The response to adversity by J.B. is, in his view, authentically that of a modern man. There is no reason for J.B. to act in imitation of Job, who, says Van Dusen, was incredible. It should be apparent from the summary of the play given earlier in this report that MacLeish does not connect, in the final resolution, human love with divine. Van Dusen defends the play's solution to J.B.'s problem: "If MacLeish has recourse to human integrity and human love for the answer to J.B.'s need, it is, again, because the Biblical Job offers him nothing beyond obeisance before an arbitrary and heartless Cosmic power."[52]

All of the opinions on J.B. which base their evaluations on theological argument must remain inconclusive. As Van Dusen says, "this drama may evoke the most diverse and even opposite responses from people of like presuppositions dwelling within an intimate spiritual community."[53] But if the theologians do not agree on the value or message of the play, the student can agree with Joseph Wood Krutch, who proclaimed that although MacLeish has taken for the theme of his play an insolvable problem, he has at least produced an "impressive demonstration of the fact" that modern drama can have as its subject the relation of man to God. "This means, of course, neither the realism nor the sociology that were once supposed to have permanently displaced poetry, symbolism, and metaphysics as the method and the subject of modern literature. J.B. is...evidence that the universe is back again at the center of the stage."[54]

Perhaps the most concise answer to the theological objections to J.B. was made by Parley A. Christiansen. He wrote: "One should not expect in J.B. a defense of dogma, a philosophy of religion,

a commendatory footnote to the Book of Job. J.B., as I read it, was intended to be a tragedy, and tragedy in life and literature has always been a challenge to the claims of religion."55 This critic claims that MacLeish wrote a tragedy faithful to the tragic experiences of life "and true in spirit to the great tragedies of literature." To Christiansen, the play is a demonstration of "how man loses his God in an inexplicable universe and in so doing finds himself."56

V

There is a major difference between the criticism of J.B. reported in this chapter and that of MacLeish's earlier works. In the second chapter the criticism reported on dealt mainly with meaning. Each writer was striving to present an interpretation of the poet's theme and, to some extent, evaluate his success in conveying that theme. When dealing with J.B., the critics usually make a positive statement of the theme and concentrate their efforts about the validity of it. Thus the emphasis is not on explaining what the poet says but rather whether or not the critic agrees with him. Obviously there

can be no single analysis acceptable to all who study the play. There is rather a set of alternatives, based upon different basic assumptions on the nature of J.B., which can serve as points of departure for one undertaking the study of it.

One can deal with the play as an entity unconnected with its source or with traditional theology. If, J.B. is considered solely within its own context, it is possible to accept its resolution as consistent with its dramatic problem. To do this however would require deliberate avoidance of the fact that there are lines taken directly from the Bible, which clearly connect the play to its source; one would also be required to avoid consideration of the explications of the Book of Job by MacLeish. While the latter may be valid in view of the fact that the play preceded the explications, the former is unrealistic, and none of the criticism uncovered for the period of this survey ignores the source of the story. To avoid relatingthe play to traditional theology would be to deny a major segment of the culture which produced the problems the play deals with. It is readily apparent that this alternative is limited in usefulness; to isolate J.B. would be

to relegate it to simple escapist entertainment. The existence of such a large volume of criticism makes such an approach illogical.

Another alternative, to treat the play in relation to its source, requires taking a controversial position. One must provide an interpretation of the Book of Job and relate J.B. to this in terms of meaning and fidelity. This approach will necessitate a determination of the degree to which a literary work is required to adhere to its source. As the commentary reported in section IV of this chapter illustrates, even professional theological critics disagree on this point. This alternative also requires the taking of a position on MacLeish's interpretation of the Bible version of the Job story. The student must be willing to accept or deny the validity of MacLeish's explication and further to evaluate the play in terms of his decision in this matter. No matter what his decision he must be prepared to refute the opposition of respected Biblical scholars.

It is possible to evaluate MacLeish's play in terms of contemporary conditions. The author has said, as I have indicated in section I of this chapter, that J.B. is a contemporary play.

The student must determine the accuracy of MacLeish's version of our modern history and the appropriateness of his solution to its attendant problems, as presented in the play itself and as they exist in the present human situation. One undertaking the study of the play from this approach must do so with an awareness that the contempory critics of the play have not and perhaps cannot reach agreement in this area.

It is clear that at this time one cannot with confidence declare in favor of any single approach to J. B.. It cannot be stated, now, that this play has those enduring qualities of drama which will establish its permanence. It will have to stand the test of time and the objectivity of critics a generation or more removed from today. It can be said, however, that this play has already become a concept as well as a drama. It has generated so much comment that the title no longer signifies merely a play but also a debate on man, God, and life. Throughout his productive period Archibald MacLeish has presented man groping for a philosophical basis for existence. In

J.B. he has offered a solution; it is too early to determine if it may be the solution.

Footnotes

Introduction

[1]Two accurate and concise biographical articles on MacLeish are: S.J. Kunitz, Twentieth Century Authors (New York, 1942), pp. 622-623; 1st supplement (New York, 1955), pp. 866-888, and Louis Untermeyer, Lives of the Poets (New York, 1959), pp. 707-709.

[2]A phrase applied to MacLeish by Michael Gold, "Out of the Fascist Unconscious," New Republic, LXXV (1933), 295-296. This attacked Frescoes for Mr. Rockefeller's City on political grounds. A debate ensued involving both literary and political comment, the articles concerned with the controversy have been included in the Bibliography, Section III. For a concise but accurate account of the controversy, see D. Aaron, "Statement and Counter-statement," in Writers on the Left (New York, 1961), pp. 231-268. A chronological account of MacLeish's role - but less informative - is in Willard Thorp, American Writing in the Twentieth Century (Cambridge, 1960), pp. 223-224.

[3]The label applied to MacLeish by A. Ranney, "Review of 'Freedom is the Right to Choose,' by A. MacLeish," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, CCLXXX (March, 1952), 186.

Chapter One

[1]Originally in New Found Land (1930); all quotations in this chapter, unless otherwise indicated, are from Archibald MacLeish, Collected Poems, 1917-1952 (Boston, 1952). "Men" is on p. 60.

[2]Originally in New Found Land (1930), Collected Poems, pp. 61-62.

[3]First published as a separate volume, (Boston, 1932), it reappeared in Poems, 1924-1933 (Boston, 1933) and in Collected Poems, 1917-1952 (Boston, 1952).

[4]In Some Modern American Poets (Oxford, 1950), p. 130.

[5]In 1932 ed., pp. 20-21. In Collected Poems, pp. 246-247.

[6]Edna Lou Walton, "Archibald MacLeish," The Nation, CXXXVIII (1934), 48.

[7]Allen Tate, "MacLeish's Conquistador," in Reactionary Essays on Poetry and Ideas (New York, 1936), p. 208.

[8]Stephen Vincent Benét, "Conquistador," in Designed for Reading, ed. H. S. Canby (New York, 1934), p.270.

[9]Ibid, p. 266

[10]Lincoln Kirstein, "Arms and Men," Hound and Horn, V (1932), 488.

[11]W. E. Aiken, "Poetic Form in Conquistador," MLN, LI (1936), 107.

[12]Benét, Designed for Reading, p. 269.

[13]Southworth, Some Modern American Poets, p. 125.

[14]Kimon Friar, "The Poet of Action," New Republic, CXIV, December 15, 1952, p. 19.

[15]Hayden Carruth, "MacLeish's Poetry," The Nation, CLXXVI (1953), 103.

[16]Babette Deutsch, This Modern Poetry (New York, 1935), p. 219. She makes a similar statement in Poetry in Our Time (New York, 1952), p. 147.

[17]Howard Blake, "Thoughts on Modern Poetry," Sewanee Review, XLIII (1935), 192-193.

[18]Originally in Streets in the Moon (1926), in Collected Poems, p. 18-19.

[19]Richard Eberhart, "The Pattern of MacLeish's Poetry," New York Times Book Review, November 23, 1952, pp. 5-48.

[20]Eberhart, "Pattern of MacLeish's Poetry," p. 48.

[21]John Ciardi, "The Poetry of Archibald MacLeish," Atlantic Monthly, CXCI, May, 1953, pp. 67-68.

[22]Ciardi, "The Poetry of MacLeish," pp. 67-68.

[23]Originally in Public Speech (1936), in Collected Poems, pp. 103-104.

[24]Yvor Winters, In Defense of Reason (Denver, 1951), p. 22.

[25]Winters, In Defense of Reason, p. 134.

[26]William Van O'Connor, Sense and Sensibility in Modern Poetry (New York, 1963), pp. 186-188. Originally published by the Chicago University Press in 1948; I have here quoted the Barnes and Noble edition which was printed without change from the original text.

[27]Rolfe Humphries, "Archibald MacLeish," Modern Monthly, VIII (June 1934), 267.

[28]Humphries, "Archibald MacLeish," 267.

[29]Morton Zabel, "The Poet on Capitol Hill," Partisan Review, VIII (1941), 2-19, 128-145. Mr. Zabel, in the course of his discussion, cites derivations from Pound, Eliot, Apollinaire, Perse, Cendrars, Salmon, and Laforgue.

[30]Zabel's attack was part of the general controversy which arose when MacLeish was appointed Librarian of Congress. Much of the debate was carried on in the "Letters to the Editor" columns of the weekly news periodicals; one highly personal attack which may be of interest to students of such matters is Burton Rascoe's "The Touch Muscle Boys of Literature," The American Mercury, LI (1940), 369-374. This article pays particular attention to MacLeish's essay The Irresponsibles (New York, 1940). (Also published in The Nation, Cl, [1940] 618ff.) A defense of MacLeish's statements on the poet's position in public crises is Eleanor M. Sickles, "Archibald MacLeish and American Democracy," American Literature, XV (1943), 223-227.

[31]Vernon Loggins, I Hear America (New York, 1937), p. 328.

[32]Elizabeth Donnald, "An Ideal of Confidence Reflected by Some Contemporary American Poets," The Furman Bulletin, XXII (April 1940), 3-17. The quotation is from page 3.

[33]Kimon Friar, "The Poet of Action," New Republic, CXIV, December 15, 1952, p. 19.

[34]John G. Brunini, "Review of Collected Poems, 1917-1952, by Archibald MacLeish," The Catholic World, CLXXXIII, January, 1953, p. 318.

[35]Eberhart, "Pattern of MacLeish's Poetry," p. 48.

[36]Archibald MacLeish, The Fall of the City: A Verse Play for Radio (New York, 1937); the quotation which follows is taken from the publication of the play in John Gassner, ed., Twenty Best Plays of the Modern American Theatre (New York, 1939), pp. 773-774.

[37]Archibald MacLeish, Air Raid: A Verse Play for Radio (New York, 1938).

[38]Dayton Kohler, "MacLeish and the Modern Temper," South Atlantic Quarterly, XXXVIII (1939), 425.

[39]Merrill Denison, "Radio and the Writer," Theatre Arts Monthly, XXII, (1938), 365-370. A complimentary appraisal of MacLeish's contribution to the medium of radio per se.

Chapter Two

[1]Robert Penn Warren, "Twelve Poets," American Review, III (1934), 213.

[2]"Twelve Poets," 214.

[3]"Twelve Poets," 216.

[4]Morton Zabel, "The Cinema of Hamlet," Poetry, XLIV (1934), 155.

[5]In Collected Poems, pp. 199-223. The passage quoted is on p. 219.

[6]Zabel, "Cinema of Hamlet," 155. "Einstein" appears in Collected Poems, pp. 225-232.

[7]Collected Poems, p. 230.

[8]Zabel, "Cinema of Hamlet," 156.

[9]See note 29 Chapter I above.

[10]Zabel, "Cinema of Hamlet," 154.

[11]Zabel, "Cinema of Hamlet," 156.

[12]Zabel, "Cinema of Hamlet," 158.

[13]Zabel, "Cinema of Hamlet," 158.

[14]Oscar Cargill, Intellectual America (New York, 1941), pp. 281-292.

[15]Elizabeth Donnald, "An Ideal of Confidence," 17.

[16]"An Ideal of Confidence," 11.

[17]"An Ideal of Confidence," 5-6.

[18]In Collected Poems, pp. 221-223.

[19]Originally published in 1933. In Collected Poems, pp. 67-77.

[20]"An Ideal of Confidence," 12.

[21]Originally published in 1936. In Collected Poems, pp. 99-120.

[22]"An Ideal of Confidence," 13.

[23]In Collected Poems, pp. 105-106.

[24]See note 36 Chapter I above; the passage quoted here is on page 774.

[25]"An Ideal of Confidence," 14; the italics are mine.

[26]Malcolm Cowley, "Muse at the Microphone," New Republic, XCI (1937), 78.

[27]Originally published in The Atlantic Monthly, October, 1939 and separately in 1943; in Collected Poems, pp. 343-347.

[28]Originally published in the New Republic, November 8, 1939. In Collected Poems, pp. 333-341.

[29]"An Ideal of Confidence," 15.

[30]Arthur Mizener, "The Poetry of Archibald MacLeish," Sewanee Review, XLIV (1938), 501-519.

[31]Mizener, "The Poetry of A. MacLeish," 509.

[32]Mizener, "The Poetry of A. MacLeish," 505.

[33]Mizener, "The Poetry of A. MacLeish," 506.

[34]In Collected Poems, pp. 205-206.

[35]In Collected Poems, p. 222.

[36]In Collected Poems, pp. 86-87.

[37]Mizener, "The Poetry of A. MacLeish," 512-513.

[38]Originally in Streets in the Moon (1926); in Collected Poems, "The Farm," pp. 23-25, "Eleven," p. 26.

[39]Mizener, "The Poetry of A. MacLeish," 514.

[40]Reed Whittemore, "MacLeish and the Democratic Pastoral," Sewanee Review, LXI (1953), 700-709.

[41]Whittemore, "MacLeish and the Democratic Pastoral," 702.

[42]Frances Gillmor, "The Curve of a Continent," New Mexico University Quarterly, IV (1934), 114-122.

[43]Gillmor, "The Curve of a Continent," 114.

[44]Gillmor, "The Curve of a Continent," 114.

[45]Gillmor, "The Curve of a Continent," 118.

[46]In Collected Poems, pp. 50-51.

[47]Gillmor, "The Curve of a Continent," 118.

[48]Originally published in 1925, in Collected Poems, pp. 179-197.

[49]Gillmor, "The Curve of a Continent," 117.

[50]Gillmor, "The Curve of a Continent," 120.

[51]Dayton Kohler, "MacLeish and the Modern Temper," (above, note 38 Chapter I), 416-426.

[52]Kohler, "MacLeish and the Modern Temper," 416.

[53]Kohler, "MacLeish and the Modern Temper," 418.

[54]Kohler, "MacLeish and the Modern Temper," 421.

[55]Kohler, "MacLeish and the Modern Temper," 419.

[56]Edwin Honig, "History, Document, and Archibald MacLeish," Sewanee Review, XLVIII (1940), 385-396.

[57]Honig, "History, Document, and Archibald MacLeish," 387.

[58]"History, Document, and Archibald MacLeish," 395.

[59]"History, Document, and Archibald MacLeish," 395-396.

[60]"History, Document, and Archibald MacLeish," 396.

[61]Dorothy Van Ghent, "The Poetry of Archibald MacLeish," Science and Society, II (1938), 500-511.

[62]Van Ghent, "Poetry of Archibald MacLeish," 509.

[63]Van Ghent, "Poetry of Archibald MacLeish," 501.

[64]Van Ghent, "Poetry of Archibald MacLeish," 502-503.

[65]Van Ghent, "Poetry of Archibald MacLeish," 505.

[66]Van Ghent, "Poetry of Archibald MacLeish," 506.

[67]Van Ghent, "Poetry of Archibald MacLeish," 509.

[68]Van Ghent, "Poetry of Archibald MacLeish," 511.

[69]Van Ghent, "Poetry of Archibald MacLeish," 511.

[70]The two commentaries are: "Archibald MacLeish and the Aspect of Eternity," College English, IV (1943), 402-412; and "Archibald MacLeish: the Undigested Mystery," in The Heel of Elohim (Norman, Okla., 1950), pp. 133-154.

[71]Waggoner, Heel of Elohim, p. 134.

[72]Heel of Elohim, p. 134.

[73]Heel of Elohim, p. 154.

[74]Waggoner, "MacLeish and the Aspect of Eternity," 402-403.

[75]In Collected Poems, p. 199.

[76]Waggoner, "MacLeish and the Aspect of Eternity," 405-406.

[77]Waggoner, "Aspect of Eternity," 405-406.

[78]In Collected Poems, p. 14.

[79]Waggoner, "Aspect of Eternity," 407.

[80]Waggoner, "Aspect of Eternity," 408-409.

[81]Waggoner, "The Heel of Elohim, pp. 148-151.

[82]Heel of Elohim, pp. 149-150.

[83]Heel of Elohim, p. 151.

[84]Heel of Elohim, p. 152.

[85]For example, Richard Eberhart, " 'The More I have Traveled...'," New York Times Book Review, October 10, 1954, p. 14.

[86]Archibald MacLeish, Songs for Eve (Boston, 1954), pp. 35-36.

[87]It should be noted that "The Infinite Reason" is in the volume but not one of the lyrics that give the volume its name.

[88]Sarah Hay, "Review of 'Songs for Eve,' by A. MacLeish," Saturday Review, XXXVII, D cember 4, 1954, p. 28.

[89]Songs for Eve, p. 13.

[90]Songs for Eve, p. 12.

Chapter Three

[1]Archibald MacLeish, "The Book of Job," Christian Century, LXXVI (1959), 419-422.

[2]Archibald MacLeish, "About a Trespass on a Monument," New York Times, December 7, 1958, sec. 2, p. x5.

[3]Archibald MacLeish, J.B.: A Play in Verse (Boston, 1958). All parenthetical pagination is to this edition of the play.

[4]MacLeish, "About a Trespass," p. x7.

[5]MacLeish, "The Book of Job," 419.

[6]MacLeish, "The Book of Job," 419-420.

[7]MacLeish, "About a Trespass," p. x5.

[8]MacLeish, "The Book of Job," 420-421.

[9]MacLeish, "About a Trespass," p. x5.

[10]MacLeish, "The Book of Job," 420.

[11]MacLeish, "The Book of Job," 421.

[12]MacLeish, "The Book of Job," 421-422.

[13]Saturday Review, XLI, March 8, 1958, pp. 11-12, 48.

[14]Ciardi, "Birth of a Classic," p. 48.

[15]Ciardi, "Birth of a Classic," pp. 11-12.

[16]Ciardi, "Birth of a Classic," p. 48.

[17]Ciardi, "Birth of a Classic," p. 48.

[18]Ciardi, "Birth of a Classic," p. 48.

[19]John Ciardi, "J.B. Revisited," Saturday Review, XLIII January 5, 1960, pp. 39, 55.

[20]Ciardi, "J.B. Revisited," p. 39.

[21]Ciardi, "J.B. Revisited," p. 55

[22]Robert Brustein, "The Theatre of Middle Seriousness," Harpers, March, 1959, p. 61.

[23]Marion Montgomery, "On First Looking Into MacLeish's J.B.," Modern Drama, II (December 1959), 231-242.

[24]Montgomery, "On First Looking Into MacLeish's J.B.," 239.

[25]Montgomery, "On First Looking Into MacLeish's J.B.," 240.

[26]Brooks Atkinson, "Archibald MacLeish's New Play 'J.B.,'" New York Times, April 24, 1958, p. 37.

[27]Dudley Fitts, "Afflictions of a New Job," New York Times Book Review, March 23, 1958, p. 37.

[28]Kenneth Tynan, "Portrait of the Artist as a Young Camera," The New Yorker, XXXIV, December 20, 1958, pp. 69-72.

[29]Tynan, "Portrait of the Artist. . . ," p. 71

[30]Tynan, "Portrait of the Artist . . . ," p. 72

[31]Herbert Weiner, "Job on Broadway: MacLeish's Man and the Bible's," Commentary, XXVII (1959), 157.

[32]Weiner, "Job on Broadway," 157.

[33]Weiner, "Job on Broadway," 157.

[34]Kenneth Hamilton, "The Patience of J. B.," Dalhousie Review, XLI (1961/1962)

[35]Hamilton, "The Patience of J. B.," 33.

[36]Hamilton, "The Patience of J. B.," 35.

[37]Hamilton, "The Patience of J.B.," 36.

[38]Hamilton, "The Patience of J. B.," 38.

[39]Hamilton, "The Patience of J. B.," 39.

[40]John McLaughlin, S.J., "J.B.' Under What Sign?," National Review, VI (1959), 563-564.

[41]Martin C. D'Arcy, S.J., "J.B., Wrong Answer to the Problem of Evil," Catholic World," CLXL (November 1960) 81-85.

[42]D'Arcy, "J.B., Wrong Answer to the Problem of Evil," 82.

[43]D'Arcy, "J.B., Wrong Answer to the Problem of Evil," 82.

[44]D'Arcy, "J.B., Wrong Answer to the Problem of Evil," 82.

[45]D'Arcy, "J.B., Wrong Answer to the Problem of Evil," 82-83.

[46]D'Arcy, "J.B., Wrong Answer to the Problem of Evil," 83.

[47]D'Arcy, "J.B., Wrong Answer to the Problem of Evil," 84.

[48]D'Arcy, "J.B., Wrong Answer to the Problem of Evil," 84.

[49]D'Arcy, "J.B., Wrong Answer to the Problem of Evil," 85.

[50]Bucknell Review, IX (1961), 272-280.

[51]Henry P. Van Dusen, "Third Thoughts on J.B.," Christian Century, LXXVI (1959), 106-107. Van Dusen's remarks are in reply to two brief commentaries in the same volume of Christian Century: Samuel Terrien, "J.B. and Job," 9-11; Tom F. Driver, "Notable, Regrettable," 21-22. I feel, however, that his remarks are applicable to the question of considering J.B. subject to judgment by theological standards. Van Dusen is an editor of Christian Century.

[52]Van Dusen, "Third Thoughts on J.B.," passim.

[53]Van Dusen, "Third Thoughts on J.B.," 107.

[54]Joseph Wood Krutch, "The Universe at Stage Center," Theatre Arts Monthly, XLII (August 1958), 11.

[55]Parley A. Christiansen, "J.B., the Critics, and Me," Western Humanities Review, XV (1961), 124-125.

[56]Christiansen, "J.B., the Critics, and Me," 125.

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Section III

Criticism of Poetry and Minor Drama

This section contains an annotated listing of criticism of MacLeish's poetry and drama, exclusive of J.B., for the period 1932 through 1961. In addition there are brief descriptions of several articles not directed towards the author's poetry and drama but which occur frequently in MacLeish bibliographies.

Since in many instances research is directed towards a single work, or a particular group of works, I have included in the annotations an "item line" which indicates the specific works the critic cites in his commentary. For conciseness the following symbols have been used:

For volumes cited as entities.

Symbol	Work
AF	Act Five and Other Poems
ARd	Air Raid
CP52	Collected Poems, 1917-1952
Con	Conquistador
FR	Frescoes for Mr. Rockefeller's City
LF	Land of the Free
Pan	Panic
P33	Poems, 1924-1933
PSp	Public Speech
SE	Songs for Eve
Fall	The Fall of the City
TH	The Trojan Horse
MC	This Music Crept by Me Upon the Waters

For individual poems,

1 "The Pot of Earth" (1925)
2 "Ars Poetica" (1926)
3 "Eleven" (1926)
4 "The End of the World" (1926)
5 "L'an trentiesme de mon eage" (1926)
6 "The Hamlet of A. MacLeish" (1928)
7 "Einstein" (1929)
8 "You, Andrew Marvell" (1930)
9 "Immortal Autumn" (1930)
10 "Land's End" (1930)
11 "American Letter" (1930)
12 "Cinema of a Man" (1930)
13 "Men" (1930)
14 "Not Marble Nor the Gilded Monuments" (1930)
15 "Epistle To Be Left in the Earth" (1930)
16 "Invocation to the Social Muse" (1932)
17 "America Was Promises" (1939)
18 "Colloquy for the States" (1943)

Aaron, D. "Statement and Counter-Statement," in Writers on the Left. New York, 1961, pp. 231-268.

An account of the "literary wars" of the Thirties. Makes note of the Communists' attacks on "Invocation to the Social Muse." Does not make any literary evaluations of MacLeish's work.

Item: 16.

Aiken, Conrad. "Development of a Poet." New Republic, LXXVII (1934), 287-288. Republished in Reviewer's ABC. London, 1958, pp. 278-285.

A review of Poems: 1924-1933. Finds that MacLeish's point of departure in the poems is the nostalgic, "the note of self-pity, the 'pathos of distance,' ... one eventually thinks of them as all one repetition of the same theme." MacLeish can do better. His poetry is "like somebody speaking to himself in a mirror ....if he could only break this glass and walk inward on himself or outward to the world, he could perhaps say what no other contemporary poet could say." Reviewer's ABC contains two earlier essays (1927 and 1929) both generally on the same theme of MacLeish's unrealized potential.

Items: Con, P33, 1, 6, 7, 8.

Aiken, W. E. "Poetic Form in Conquistador." MLN, LI (1936), 107-109.

Notes apparent indebtedness of Conquistador to Old English verse. Some lines of the poem follow the Old English pattern faithfully. Finds similarity in MacLeish's work to scholarly translations of Beowulf.

Item: Con.

Benét, Stephen V. "Conquistador." Saturday Review of Literature, IX April 2, 1932, pp. 629-230. Republished in Designed for Reading, ed. H. S. Canby. New York, 1934, pp. 265-270.

A complimentary review of the first edition of the poem. "MacLeish has captured in the pages of 'Conquistador' reality like that of an orchard or a ship." Benet describes the poem as "a magnificent and sustained achievement." Finds fault with MacLeish's use of conjunctions and prepositions. See Chapter One of my text.

Item: Con.

Benet, William Rose. "The Phoenix Nest: Round about Parnassus." Saturday Review of Literature, X July 29, 1933, p. 21.

A defense of MacLeish's "Frescoes for Mr. Rockefeller's City" which was attacked by Michael Gold (see below). Accuses Gold of wanting "poets to turn [into] propagandists for a particular political and economic thesis [Communism]." Despite MacLeish's view's being a personal "vision" of America, Benet says that he "is one of the very few American poets who are trying to get any perspective at all upon their own country."

Item: FR.

Bishop, John Peale. "The Social Muse Once More." New Republic, LXXIII (1933), 125-126. Republished in Collected Essays, ed. Edmound Wilson. New York, 1948, pp. 278-279.

Defends the thesis of "Invocation to the Social Muse." "Mr. MacLeish deserves the highest praise for his stand that a poet should attend to his business, which is writing poems, at a time when so many have deserted literature, to engage in polemics."

Item: 16.

_____. "Muse at the Microphone." The Nation, CL (1940), 132-133. Republished in Collected Essays, ed. Edmound Wilson. New York, 1948, pp. 304-307.

A review of Air Raid. Bishop sees the verse play as an elaboration of the theme of Public Speech. "The conflict out of which all that is most moving in MacLeish's poetry has come is a conflict between...a sensuous sound and spiritual silence. It is a conflict that lies at the heart of the age, and, because this is so, MacLeish is a poet important to the age." Bishop finds that Air Raid is true rather than tragic. MacLeish's taking away of consciousness from his characters has "denied them the possibility of tragedy. Where there is no awareness, nothing is tragic." Thus, Bishop defines Air Raid as "the poetic equivalent of a report from the scene of a catastrophe."

Items: ARd, PSp, 17.

Blake, Howard. "Thoughts on Modern Poetry." Sewanee Review, XLIII (1935), 187-196.

An essay which comments on the failure of modern poets to find a voice for the times. Mr. Blake states that their intense subjectivity does not speak for Man but only for the individual poet. Blake finds MacLeish a "brilliant technician" but lacking an orginal aesthetic, ideas, and ruling convictions. "He frequently succeeds... in rousing responses his reader would find difficult to define in prose. This is unusual lyric power. His music, however, is all in one key. It is unfortunate that the mind acute enough to reach such skill in details should fail to conceive a larger plan in which it might better employ its virtuosity."

Items: Con, 6, 8.

Bogan, Louise. "America Was Promises," in Selected Criticism: Prose and Poetry. New York, 1955, pp. 171-174.

A discussion of the technical aspects of "America Was Promises." Generally unfavorable to the work. Miss Bogan considers the poem MacLeish's "saddest public speech to date."

Item: 17.

Bradley, Samuel M. "Danger: Poet Working Here." Approach, No. 31 (Spring 1959), pp. 3-6.

This is included here because it appears in several short lists of articles about MacLeish. Bradley's article is a commentary on the theme of Pasternak's Dr. Zhivago and makes no critical statement on MacLeish or his works. Bradley mentions MacLeish as a poet who has recognized "the issue of the concept of man reflected in governments and mirrored in society," in an introductory statement.

Brenner, R. "Archibald MacLeish," in Poets of Our Time. New York, 1941, pp. 45-104.

Contains a brief biography of MacLeish. Most of the chapter on MacLeish in this book is devoted to summaries of MacLeish's better-known poems. Brenner says there is a correlation between the sentiments expressed in the poems and the public life of the poet. He does not expand on this thesis. This is a useful review of MacLeish's poetry for a student unfamiliar with the poet. The item line gives the poems summarized by Brenner.

Items: Con, FR, P33, PSp, Pan, Fall, ARd, 1,2,3,5,6,7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 16.

Brooks, Cleanth. "Frost, MacLeish, and Auden," in Modern Poetry and the Tradition. Chapel Hill, N.C., 1939, pp. 110-135.

A discussion of MacLeish as an "imagist." Brooks finds that MacLeish's work lacks "dynamic tension." He cites Panic as an example; "there is no dramatic relation between the civilization which is going to pieces and the central character of the play... He does not supply a focus for the forces which are supposed todominate the play." MacLeish's best poems are "remarkably solid, but they are as static as statuary." Brooks says that MacLeish's best work to date (1939) is Frescoes for Mr. Rockefeller's City in which the poet seems to be searching for a "controlling principle."

Items: Con, Pan, FR, 2,8.

Brown, Leonard. "Our Contemporary Poetry." Sewanee Review, XLI (1933), 43-62.

A review of The New Poetry. eds. Harriet Monroe and Alice C. Henderson. rev. ed. New York. 1932.

In comparing MacLeish's "The End of the World" with other works in the anthology, Brown says that this poem illustrates the new movement in modern poetry which is bankrupt of romantic thought. Thus, MacLeish is one of the voices of our time. MacLeish commits an error in "The End of the World" by attempting to represent chaos in the rigid form of the sonnet.

Item: 4.

Brunini, John Gilland. "Review of Collected Poems, 1917-1952, by A. MacLeish." Catholic World, CLXXXIII (Jan. 1953), 318.

"Poetry without meaning is not poetry at all but, as in much of Mr. MacLeish's work, merely a superb exhibition of craftsmanship." Brunini holds MacLeish's "forte" to be the lyric and finds that in the longer poems "the intellect is too coldly employed." According to this critic, MacLeish "shows singularly little feeling and very few traces of recognition that poetry is itself an activity of the spiritual man in a supernatural universe."

Items: CP52, 2.

Cargill, Oscar. Intellectual America. New York, 1941, pp. 176-310.

A detailed analysis of MacLeish's poetry based on the premise that the poet's best efforts have been in the "Decadent Tradition." Cargill expresses the opinion that MacLeish's poetry of the Thirties is an unsuccessful attempt to break with this tradition. According to Cargill, MacLeish's prose of the Forties commits him to the abandonment of Decadence. This critic doubts that MacLeish can retain excellence in his poetry after denying the tradition that "nurtured and matured" him. The works listed in the item line are cited by Cargill to illustrate MacLeish's development away from the Decadent Tradition.

Items: Con, FR, PSp, LF, Pan, Fall, ARd, 1,2,6,8,14,16,17.

Carruth, Hayden. "MacLeish's Poetry." The Nation, CLXXVI (1953), 103.

A review of Poems: 1917-1952. Criticizes the longer poems unfavorably because of their reliance on structures outside of themselves. Carruth finds Conquistador an improvement in this regard but dislikes the "tricks and unnecssary devices." This critic praises

MacLeish's short lyrics and compliments The Trojan Horse as MacLeish's best verse drama.

Items: Con, CP52, 1,6,8,17,18, TH.

Ciardi, John. "The Poetry of Archibald MacLeish." Atlantic Monthly, CXCI, May, 1953, pp. 67-68.

A review of Poems: 1917-1952. Ciardi describes the collection as a body of poetry divided between two opposite theories of poetic responsibility. "Should it [poetry] explore emotions of individual sensation or loss or should it accept the challenge of a specific political assignment?" Ciardi counts as successes the poems of intense personal feelings and as failures the "orations on political causes." Ciardi praises the later poems, since 1951, as adding "up to the most exciting poetic resurgence since Yeats found his late style." Ciardi devotes considerable effort to an explanation of MacLeish's technique; see Chapter One of this thesis for a resume.

Items: Con, FR, TH, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 15, 17, 18.

_____. "Haunted by Time." The Nation, CLXXVII (1954), 15.

A review of This Music Crept by Me upon the Waters. Considers the play a successful result of MacLeish's experimentation with poetic line. "What matters is that it is poetry, formed and rhythmically convincing both as a line to be received by an audience and as a formalization of American speech." Ciardi rates MacLeish's line an important advance in modern poetic drama.

Item: MC.

Connolly, Francis X. Poetry: Its Power and Wisdom. New York, 1960, pp. 67-69, 233.

Cites "Ars Poetica" as example of the need for a progression of thought in a successful poem. Connolly points out that although the poem says "A poem should not mean/But be." in itself it follows a concrete line of reasoning. Connolly cites Conquistador as evidence of the continuing "epic impulse" in poetry.

Items: Con, 2.

Cowley, Malcolm. "Muse at the Microphone." New Republic, XCI (May 1937), 78.

A review of The Fall of the City. MacLeish is only partially successful in transforming private speech into public speech. "He [MacLeish] couldn't write bad verse, but in this he has given us something less inventive, poorer in music and images, than his verse at its best."

Item: Fall.

Cunliffe, Marcus. The Literature of The United States. Baltimore, 1954, pp. 320-321.

A literary history noting merely that MacLeish was one of the writers who spent the 1920's in Europe. Makes a generalization that the poet's poems of "social protest" marks a decline from earlier works. No treatment of MacLeish's works in detail.

Items: Con, 17.

Denison, Merrill. "Radio and the Writer." Theatre Arts Monthly, XXII (1938), 365-370.

An essay discussing the potential of radio as a vehicle for verse drama. Fall of the City is cited as evidence of the compatability of Radio and verse. Praises the "visual images" evoked during the broadcast of the play.

Item: Fall.

Deutsch, Babette. This Modern Poetry. New York, 1935, pp. 214-219, 220, 266.

A survey of modern poets. Makes particular note of MacLeish's indebtness to Pound and Eliot. "What gives this poetry [MacLeish's] power is MacLeish's gift for the significant detail, his feeling for cadence, charging the lines with a halted andante music. What gives it sharpness is his unhappy awareness of these times." Miss Deutsch praises the verse technique of Conquistador, but dislikes MacLeish's verse drama; she describes Panic as "incongruous rhetoric."

Items: Con, FR, Pan, 1, 4, 11.

_____. Poetry In Our Time. New York, 1952, pp. 145-148, 355.

Also a survey. The influence of the other poets on MacLeish is diluted by his use of the "additional adjective, the lengthened line, and the softness" of entire poems. Miss Deutsch praises the imagery and technique of Conquistador, but says it lacks "narrative power" and a central theme.

Items: Con, 16.

_____. "Archibald MacLeish's Achievement: The Poet as Artist and Citizen." New York Herald Tribune Book Review, Nov. 23, 1952, p. 5.

A review of Poems: 1917-1952. Miss Deutsch finds MacLeish's concern with the role of the poet the theme of most interest in the collection. There are times when the poet must choose between his duty as a citizen and his duty as an artist. From the start, according to this critic, considerations of this problem have been MacLeish's "vexing concern." Cited in support of this analysis are "Ars Poetica," "Invocation to the Social Muse," and "The Renovated Temple." Miss Deutsch considers Conquistador "the best of MacLeish's long poems," still subject to the reservations she made earlier (see above.)

Items: Con, CP52, 2, 3, 16.

Donnald, Elizabeth. "An Ideal Confidence Reflected by some Contemporary Poets." Furmen Bulletin, XXII, No. 7 (1940), 3-17.

In this article the development of MacLeish is traced in terms of a transition in poetic mood from despair to hope. Miss Donnald notes the subjectivity of the early poems in Poems: 1924-1933, and the objectivity of the later poems on public issues. She cites, for example, "Colloquy For the States" (1939), and "America Was Promises" (1939). Miss Donnald is in favor of the "transition."

Items: Con, FR, P33, PSp, 6, 16, 17, 18.

Donoghue, D. "Mood Play in Verse: Stevens, Eberhart, and MacLeish," in Third Voice. Princeton, N. J., 1959, pp. 193-212.

A discussion, generally unfavorable, of the "mood play." Donoghue considers this an identifiable genre and MacLeish's This Music Crept by Me upon the Waters an example of the "negative values" of the genre. The play has "no real motive." According to Donoghue, "there is no sign of that poise, that ability to entertain

discordant elements and judgments, which is as necessary in drama as thought." Donoghue says that MacLeish repudiated the aesthetic of the mood play in J.B., and, therefore, it is more acceptable as drama. See the bibliography for J.B.

Item: MC.

Eberhart, Richard. "The Pattern of MacLeish's Poetry." New York Times Book Review, Nov. 23, 1952, pp. 5, 48.

A review of Collected Poems 1917-1952. Eberhart describes the collection as, "a major achievement in American letters." This critic defines MacLeish's poetic technique as basically the use of two types of poetic line. He considers MacLeish's "plain line" with simple, direct, meaning the successful. He finds that MacLeish attempts "mysterious lines" with pervasive images and subtle shifts of significance; this, he says, "is not MacLeish's line." In this critic's opinion, the second type of line detracts from MacLeish's overall qualities. The volumes, as a whole, makes it possible to "feel the scope and brunt of the whole man."

Items: Con, CP52, TH, 6, 7, 17.

_____. "'The More I Have Traveled. . .'." New York Times Book Review, Oct. 10, 1954, p. 14.

A review of Songs for Eve. According to Eberhart these poems represent "innocence in maturity." The poems are lauded for lyricism and versatility. "Each poem is a charm. The whole experience of reading it [the volume] is delightful."

Item: SE.

Friar, Kimon. "The Poet of Action." New Republic, CXIV, Dec. 15, 1952, p. 19.

A review of Collected Poems 1917-1952. Describes MacLeish as "primarily a poet, a man of passion and compassion, a craftsman of integrity." The poems in the volume are not invalidated even though they may contradict each other. Friar considers MacLeish at his best in the lyrics; he counts as failures the long poems excepting "Einstein," and "The Hamlet of A. MacLeish." Friar praises the new poems in the collection; "all of them show greater mastery of condensation and precision of imagery."

Items: Con, FR, CP52, TH, 6, 7, 11, 16, 17.

Gassner, John. The Theater in Our Times. New York, 1954, pp. 5, 291.

A brief comment citing The Fall of the City and Air Raid as example of the potentialities of radio drama. Counts the broadcasts of these works a major contribution by radio to dramatic literature.

Items: Fall, ARd.

Gillmor, Frances. "The Curve of a Continent." New Mexico University Quarterly, IV (1934), 114-122.

A shaping factor in MacLeish's work is the "spatial concept." Gillmor defines this factor as "an emphasis on the great spaces of the North American continent stretching west." This critic finds evidence of this concept in all of MacLeish's major works to date (1934). According to this analysis, the spatial concept "gives him [MacLeish] roots in America." In his poetry of the early thirties, MacLeish "declares his faith in the possibility of free creation and action, for the individual, for the nation."

Items: Con, FR, 1, 3, 6, 7, 8, 11.

Gold Michael, "Out of the Fascist Unconcious." New Republic, LXXV (1933), 295-296.

An article frequently appearing in MacLeish bibliographies. A Communist attack on Frescoes for Mr. Rockefeller's City. Based on the Marxist concept that arts in general have a political significance, this article charges that MacLeish's poetry in this group of poems is "mystic nationalism" and the first sign of the true "Fascist mind." Considers MacLeish lines in "Background with Revolutionaries" anti-semetic and anti-intellectual.

Item: FR.

Gregory, Horace. "Poets in the Theatre." Poetry, XLVIII (1936), 221-228.

An unfavorable commentary on Panic. Finds that either "theemotion is inflated because the imagery is false or . . . the imagery is false because the emotion is inflated." MacLeish's preference for open vowels blurs the sound and sense of the speeches. "The entire play seems to have no other purpose than the refrain of its final chorus -- which makes the assertion that man's fate is a drum."

Item: Pan.

_____, and Mayra Zaturenska. "Archibald MacLeish and the 'Invocation to the Social Muse'," in History of American Poetry, 1900-1940. New York, 1946, pp. 448-457.

Expresses belief that MacLeish's work will survive time. MacLeish is compared favorably with Hemingway. The value of MacLeish's poetry rests upon a lyrical gift and a phrasing of rhetoric that belong to MacLeish alone. Most of this commentary is devoted to describing MacLeish's better known poems.

Items: Con, P33, PSp, Fall, ARd, 1, 2, 6, 8, 9, 14, 16, 17.

Hay, Sarah H. "Review of 'Songs for Eve' by A. MacLeish." Saturday Review, XXXVII, Dec. 4, 1954, p. 28.

A highly favorable review. "Archibald MacLeish has invested his point of view of the story of the Fall with a wonderful freshness and delight, and given an old story a new lucidity and grace, as well as a stirring and dramatic aspect." This critic defines the basic theme of the volume as a sequence of lyrics demonstrating that The Fall was to grace rather than from it.

Item: SE.

Honig, Edwin. "History, Document, and Archibald MacLeish." Sewanee Review, XLVIII (1940), 385-396.

This critic finds MacLeish's work "symptomatic of a new shift in sensibility" in modern poetry. This shift is a move away from poetry's traditional role as interpreter of events to the mere recording of them. This the critic defines as poetry as document rather than history. This critic subscribes to the belief that poetry should perform a social or political function.

Items: Con, FR, PSp, Pan, Fall, ARd, 1, 6, 7, 11.

Humphries, Rolfe. "The Social Muse Once More." New Republic, LXXIII (1933), 347-348.

A letter to the editor commenting on the discussion of the role of the poet in social crisis which was instigated by MacLeish's "Invocation to the Social Muse." Humphries expresses the opinion that poets must attach themselves to that class in society which "has the gift of leisure in its power to bestow."

As long as the "master class" is an owning class, "the poets will be bourgeois poets." Therefore it is impossible "to synchronize poets and revolution." The poet supporting the established order is the poet "of past revolution." Revolutions of the present abolish the leisure of the present; this leaves, to the poet of revolutionary leanings, only "the revolution of the future to set down."

Item: 16.

_____. "Archibald MacLeish." Modern Monthly, VIII (1934), 264-270, 274.

An attack on MacLeish which charges that the poet's better known works are intentional imitations of the poetry of Eliot and Pound. "I do not mean that Mr. MacLeish is influenced by this contemporary, or borrows to advantage from that one; I mean much more, I mean that he depends on this one or that one for his very existence." Humphries says that while normal poetic development is from imitation to origionality, MacLeish has gone "from imitation to more extended feats of that art."

Items: Con, FR, P33, 1.

Jones, Llewellyn. "Archibald MacLeish: A Modern Metaphysical." English Journal, XXIV (1935), 441-451.

The term metaphysical is applied to MacLeish in the sense that he is "poet of many voices," but, pervading throughout his work is a quality usually identified with the metaphysical poets. This article is a defense of MacLeish against the attacks of the political left which, this critic says, put bounds on the range of poetry. Jones says that MacLeish is a modern poet "yet he has never cut the cord binding his vocabularies to the traditional past."

Items: Con, FR, P33, 1, 11, 15, Pan.

Kirstein, Lincoln. "Arms and Men." Hound and Horn, V (1932), 484-492.

A favorable review of Conquistador. According to Kirstein, Conquistador "is a rehabilitation of a language, raising new standards in symbols and reasserting the idea of heroism." This critic sees a similarity, in MacLeish's work, to the optomism in Carlyle's Heroes and Hero Worship. "In short, MacLeish's religion is the hero's belief in the possibility of a hero."

Item: Con.

Kohler, Dayton. "MacLeish and the Modern Temper." South Atlantic Quarterly, XXXVIII (1939), 416-426.

Kohler traces MacLeish's poetic development in terms of theme. He sees a progression from "minor, derivative themes, like the nostalgia of old loves, early times, other places, the hard lot of the poet in exile, to subjects of great verse, praise of the land and the difficult histories of men." This critic outlines two currents of poetic attitude in MacLeish's poetry: "his sense of the past and his deep loyalty and passion for the American land." Kohler believes that MacLeish sees the problem of man's fate depending "upon the preservation of a national tradition."

Items: Con, FR, P33, PSp, LF, Pan, Fall, ARd, 6, 16, 17.

Kreymborg, A. "The Moon is Dead." Saturday Review of Literature, X, Jan. 27, 1934, p. 435. Republished in College Omnibus, ed. James D. McCallum, New York, 1936, pp. 308-310.

A Review of Poems: 1917-1933. According to Kreymborg it summarizes the post-war period and the "Lost Generation." Kreymborg says that MacLeish "won his growing audience through the mood of his poetry: a tragic disdain of life, even of love, of sex; a devotion to death, bone, stone, and all." In defending MacLeish against the attacks of the "left" this critic says that "we have no right to demand that an artist attach himself to some new program." In Kreymborg's opinion MacLeish's poetry will "survive contemporary arguments."

Item: P33.

Kunitz, S.J. Twentieth Century Authors. New York, 1942; First Supplement, New York, 1955.

Pages 622-623 of the 1942 ed. has a brief biography of MacLeish and a short bibliography. The bibliography includes the comments by political writers about MacLeish's appointment as Librarian of Congress; those entries about MacLeish's poetry and drama are included in this thesis. Pages 866-888 of the First Supplement continue MacLeish's biography through his appointment as Boylston professor of rhetoric and oratory at Harvard. Bibliography in the First Supplement adds articles appearing between 1944 and 1953.

Lash, Kenneth. "Myth and the Conquest of Mexico." New Mexico Quarterly Review, XVII (Spring 1947), 38-44.

Lash defines Myth as "a story of epic proportions in which natural and prenatural forces join to symbolize the essential realities of man in his world." While agreeing that Conquistador has high dignity, a feeling for the greatness of man, and insistence upon the essential personality of history, Lash argues that MacLeish drew upon the mythical content of the story of the conquest of Mexico, but failed to add to it as he should have.

Item: Con.

Lindeman, Edward C. "A Tribute to MacLeish." New Republic, CII (1940), 213.

A note complimenting the view expressed by MacLeish in "America Was Promises." According to Lindeman, "if there is to be a New Republic and a free nation with humanistic promises twenty-five years from now, it will be because the voice of MacLeish has been heard and acted upon." The intellectuals of the land "must give heed to MacLeish the poet statesman" if the country is to be saved from barbarity.

Item: 17.

Loggins, Vernon. I Hear America. New York, 1937, pp. 328-330.

A survey of modern poetry. Loggins finds MacLeish most interesting as an experimenter. "His verse illustrates a happy synthesis of the theories of Pound and Eliot." Loggins says that MacLeish represents a compromise, "for he wishes to be read by more than the intellectual few."

Items: Con, FR, Pan, Fall.

McCallum, James D. ed. "The Revised College Omnibus: Shorter Edition. New York, 1940, pp. 1047ff., 1254-1257.

An anthology of modern writings. On pages 1047ff. McCallum presents Air Raid in its entirety. It is proof, he says, that radio drama "can treat of the actual, the present, the easily possible, forcefully, convincingly, and poetically." Pages 1254-1257 treat MacLeish's poetry; reproduced in full are "Memorial Rain," and "You,

Andrew Marvell." According to his remarks introducing these poems, McCallum finds MacLeish a member of "the generation that has revived the past in literature, [but] he is contemporary in mood and manner." Panic is cited as "a play which shows MacLeish unable to accept any of the current panaceas, but sensitively expressing the chaotic spirit of his day."

Items: P33, Pan, ARd, 1, 8.

Mizener, Arthur. "The Poetry of Archibald MacLeish." Sewanee Review, XLIV (1938), 501-19.

MacLeish's career has the appearance of being a series of unconnected allegiances. Mizener finds a continuity in MacLeish's poetry despite this variance in ideas. In all of the poet's work, to 1938, this critic finds that there has been in MacLeish continuous, though developing, fundamental feelings expressed by two consistently appearing symbols: World War I and America. While the early personal view of these two symbols contrasts with the later public poems, "there is never any sharp break" in the development of MacLeish's sensibility. Mizener, in 1938, says the development is not complete, but predicts a major poem expressing the present attitude towards the two symbols.

Items: P33, FR, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11.

Monroe, Harriet. "Archibald MacLeish," in Poets and Their Art. New York, 1932, pp. 114-119.

Survey of modern poets. A brief biography of MacLeish's early years with brief descriptions of MacLeish's major works up to and including Conquistador. Does not contain evaluation or critical comment.

Item: Con, 1, 5.

O'Connor, William Van. Sense and Sensibility in Modern Poetry. New York, 1948; 2nd ed. New York 1963, pp. 28-29, 185-188.

An attack on the "waste land school of poetry." O'Connor charges MacLeish's poetry with a lack of tension, "a failure to reconcile opposites." O'Connor agrees with Humphries's charge of imitation (see above), and Zabel's similar attack (see below). See chapter one of this thesis.

Item: Con, ARd, 7, 8, 15.

Powell, Charles. "The Poetry of 1933." The Manchester Guardian Weekly Supplement, XXIX, December 8, 1933, p. 9.

Summary of new poetry for the year. No criticism of note. Conquistador is "notable both for its quality, which should confirm in this country [England] his [MacLeish] high reputation in the United States, and for its form."

Item: Con.

Rodman, Seldon. "The Social Muse Once More." New Republic, LXXIII, (1933), 347.

A comment in the discussion of the artist's role in society centering on MacLeish's "Invocation to the Social Muse." Rodman says that MacLeish's poem "illustrates the dilemma of the artist who still maintains the defense of 'art for Arts sake' but at the same time has too much intellectual honesty to accept American capitalism." According to this critic, the poem states exactly what the present (1933) generation must face. Rodman raises the question of the presence of fit subject matter for the artist in capitalistic society.

Item: 16.

_____. "Two Poetic Voices of Our Time." New York Times Book Review, No. 22, 1953, pp. 5, 38.

An unfavorable review of This Music Crept by Me Upon the Waters. Rodman finds the dialogue "nothing footloose conversation." This critic feels the play is far short of MacLeish's capabilities. The text indicates to Rodman that while poets "have been coming out of their closets MacLeish, in the process of disengaging himself from public life and oratory writing, has retreated into a rather narrow room of his own."

Item: MC

Rosenberg, Harold. "The God in the Car." Poetry, LII (1938), 334-342.

Part of the discussion on a poet's role in society. This article is frequently listed in reference to MacLeish. It was written in reply to an essay by MacLeish, "In Challenge not Defense," which appeared in the same volume of Poetry and which is included in the collection, A Time to Speak. Boston, 1940. MacLeish's position that the poet must not espouse a particular political or sociological line, but rather ideals, was attacked by Rosenberg as unrealistic in the world of the present (1930's) and not in accord with the traditional role of the poet.

Rosenfeld, P. "Union Pacific," in Discoveries of a Music Critic. New York, 1936, pp. 346-349.

A comment on the ballet Union Pacific dealing mainly with the musical score and the choreography. In general, Rosenfeld feels the ballet does not measure up to the historical event it treats of; it is, he says, "incomplete and at moments trivial." MacLeish failed to produce a libretto "that would have permitted the composer to represent the creative event."

Item: Union Pacific.

Salomon, I. L. "Review of Collected Poems, 1917-1952 by A. MacLeish." Saturday Review, XXXV, Dec. 27, 1952, p. 18.

Highly favorable. MacLeish's newer lyrics "are achievements that only a sensitive imagination could create." The lyrics and narrative poems testify that the poet "has realized his potentialities as a mature artist." Salomon says that MacLeish's most exciting radio play was The Fall of the City and it should have been included in the collection.

Items: Con, 5, 6, 18.

Schappes, Morris U. "The Direction of A. MacLeish." Symposium, III (1932), 476-494.

A survey of the subject matter of MacLeish's poetry and prose up to and including Conquistador. Schappes charges that MacLeish avoids real poetic problems dealing with matters "without the possibility of immediate consequences." According to Schappes, MacLeish must orient himself to a swiftly changing world. If he does this he will become "a major poet speaking vividly to his generation. If he continues to evade and to give answers without meaning, we shall for the sake of his technical power, continue to watch him as he dances through phantom doors."

Items: Con, 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Sickles, Eleanor M. "Archibald MacLeish and American Democracy." American Literature, XV (1943), 223-227.

A study of MacLeish's prose and poetry demonstrating that MacLeish's position favoring the active anti-fascist view of artists, at the onset of World War II, is a

logical outcome of his poetic development. Sickles finds three things expressed consistently by MacLeish which she claims are his beliefs: "the dignity of the individual, the reality of nonmaterial values, and the importance of the expression of these things in words." Critical charges of intellectual shifting by MacLeish are answered by this critic as the changing application of these beliefs in a poet developing and maturing during a time of immense change in the world. His call for poetic support of the anti-fascists is not a reversal of his belief that the' artist is responsible to the society for the maintainance "of the integrity of the word." It is, under the circumstances of World War II, a logical application, according to this critic.

Items: Con, FR, PSp, LF, Fall, 1, 2, 6, 11, 13, 16, 17, 18.

Southworth, James G. "Archibald MacLeish," in Some Modern American Poets. Oxford, 1950, pp. 122-134.

MacLeish most insistent subject is political, "but he is not political in the party sense of the word, but in its larger connotation of the problem of man's relation to society." According to Southworth, MacLeish is at his best as a political poet. "The diction, imagery, and verse-patterns of this early work have little originality; at best they reveal a sensitive ear." Conquistador is overpraised, and needlessly obscure. The attempt to capture the qualities of American speech in Panic were unsuccessful. "What he actually achieved was the type of bastard speech-rythms that our ears are deluged with when we turn on the radio." Southworth devotes most of this chapter of his book to explaining the various techniques used by MacLeish in his better known poems and why he, Southworth, is not satisfied with the result.

Items: Con, P33, LF, Pan, Fall, ARd, 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17.

Spiller, Robert E. et. al. eds. Literary History of the United States. 3 vols. New York, 1948. 1st supplement, New York, 1953.

Volume II, 1948 ed. has brief description of MacLeish as the "middleman" between "the experimenters and the general public." Volume III, page 636, has a short bibliography of critical comment. Additional bibliographical material is to be found on pages 162-163 of the 1st supplement.

Tate, Allen. "MacLeish's 'Conquistador,'" in Reactionary Essays on Poetry and Ideas. New York, 1936, pp. 202-209. Republished in On the Limits of Poetry. New York, 1948, pp. 365-370

Compliments the "sustained tone" of the poem. "There is not one moment of action rendered objectively in the entire poem. There is constantly and solely the pattern of sensation that surrounded the moment of action--the fringe of physical shock and awareness that survive in memory. The technique of rendering this special quality of memory is MacLeish's contribution to poetic style." Tate cites the lack of a systematic philosophy in the poem as its only drawback, but this, he says, is understandable in an age that has no definable philosophy. MacLeish's philosophy in this poem is personal and unstated and, according to Tate, is expressed "in a sentimental view of experience."

Item: Con.

Taylor, W. F. "The Story of American Letters. Chicago, 1936, Rev. ed. New York, 1956.

The 1936 edition is useful for its bibliography of early criticism of MacLeish; see page 654. Taylor's views of MacLeish are in the revised edition, pages 424-427. According to this critic, a main motivating force in MacLeish's work "has been the poet's awareness of a vast impersonal cosmos indifferent or even hostile to the uniqueness of man." Notes influences of Pound, Eliot, and Sir James Frazer's The Golden Bough in MacLeish's early poetry. Taylor discusses the subject matter of MacLeish's better known works noting MacLeish's "sensitiveness to changes in the currents of literary interest. With chameleon-like adaptability he had taken on the coloring of the vaguely lost attitudes of the nineteentwenties, the resugent nativism and the social awareness of the early thirties, and the anti-fascist attitudes in whose service he had become a nationally known figure." The best of MacLeish's poetry, says Taylor, is to be found in some lyrics and in brief lyrical passages in the longer works.

Items: Con, FR, Fall, 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 14, 17.

Thorp, Willard. American Writing in the Twentieth Century, Cambridge, Mass., 1960, pp. 223-224.

Brief description of MacLeish's public poems of the 1930's. No criticism or interpretation of meaning.

Items: FR, PSp, 16.

Untermeyer, L. "Archibald MacLeish," in Lives of the Poets. New York, 1959, pp. 707-709.

Brief biography of MacLeish. "Even his most unsparing critics have been willing to admit that MacLeish is a more than ordinary gifted craftsman." Says that critics agree that MacLeish is best in his lyrics. Untermeyer presents "The End of the World" in full, introducing it as "the quietly terrifying sonnet." Makes no criticism at length.

Van Ghent, Dorothy. "The Poetry of Archibald MacLeish." Science and Society, II (1938), 500-511.

A survey of MacLeish's poetry purporting to demonstrate a poetic development from "a gilded Platonic essence to human creatures and contemporary situations." Symptomatic of MacLeish's earliest work is "a restless questioning of the place of man in the world." In the earliest works man was subject to an "indecipherable will." With Conquistador and Frescoes for Mr. Rockefeller's City, MacLeish began to show a social consciousness although the men in his poems were still subject to an anonymous force. Land of the Free indicates that MacLeish has come to replace Fate and metaphysics with people. In this more "humanized" poetry, this critic says, MacLeish no longer deals with "human experience in the sense of passive suffering, ...but volitional human activity."

Items: Con, FR, P33, PSp, Pan, Fall, 6, 7, 9, 12.

Wade, Mason. "The Anabasis of A. MacLeish," North American Review, CCXLIII (1937), 330-343.

A discussion of MacLeish's major poems with emphasis on verse technique. Wade contends that MacLeish's poetry cannot be analyzed by "the hairsplitting" techniques of modern criticism. "One must talk around the point until the point becomes clear by elimination." MacLeish is "a master of words." Wade says that MacLeish has "a singular ability to get at the roots of language and to bring out the essential meaning." MacLeish is bringing out the richness in words that has been dulled by common usage. According to Wade, the development of MacLeish's style is a result of his desire to "overcome the lack of communication between man and the rest of creation." This desire is to be found "all through MacLeish's poetry." MacLeish's first "really good poem is 'The Hamlet of A. MacLeish.'" Conquistador is a technical triumph.

Items: Con, PSp, LF, Pan, 6, 8, 11, 13, 16.

Wagener, Siegfried. "The First American Ballet." Anon. trans., Living Age, CCCXLVIII (1935), 87-88.

A comment upon Union Pacific by a European observer of a Philiadelphia production of the Ballet. Wagener finds it "brilliant" and dramatic. The work is of major importance because, "for the first time, a purely American theme has been thought out and presented in choreographic form and set to music."

Item: Union Pacific.

Waggoner, Hyatt Howe. "Archibald MacLeish and the Aspect of Eternity." College English, IV (1943), 402-412.

An examination into MacLeish's poetic sensibility predicated on the theory that the poet's main concern has been the place of man and his mind in nature. This concern results, according to this critic, from the realization that the pre - World War I concepts of the universe had been destroyed by the scientific discoveries of the nineteen twenties. In particular, Waggoner believes that the Einstein theory of relativity, and its meaning for man, have led MacLeish to search for a poetic image which will conjoin the finite and infinite. This article is reported on in detail in chapter two of this thesis.

Items: Con, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 15, 17.

_____. "Archibald MacLeish: The Undigested Mystery," in The Heel of Elohim. Norman Okla., 1950, pp. 133-154.

Essentially the same view as expressed in the previously cited article. In this later analysis, Waggoner is dissatisfied with MacLeish's failure to find a poetic image. In the earlier article he praised MacLeish's statements of man's new position, relative to his new knowledge. But in this commentary Waggoner says that a statement is not enough, the poet should formulate something to replace that which has been destroyed. This analysis is reported on in chapter two of this thesis.

Items: Con, P33, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 15.

Walton, Edna Lou. "Archibald MacLeish." The Nation, CXXXVIII (1934), 48-49.

A discussion of MacLeish's technique. Miss Walton places much emphasis on MacLeish's success with the lyric. This critics finds that MacLeish employs two

elements of English poetry separately and effectively: rhyme, rhythm, rich or exotic imagery, influences which make up the element stemming from the Romance languages, and abrupt rhythm, clipped speech, action, and realistic imagery, influences making up the Anglo-Saxon element. The strongest passion in MacLeish "is a sense of irrevocable loss." MacLeish speaks for his generation.

Items: Con, P33, 6.

Warren, Robert Penn. "Twelve Poets." American Review, III (1934), 212-218.

A review of Poems: 1924-1933. This critic finds that although MacLeish shows an increasing flexibility in technique, an imprecision of theme persists from the early lyrics through Conquistador. MacLeish's lyrics are a record of stimuli resulting in "mere mood." The poet shows no power to dominate the stimuli that have affected him. He catalogues them in conjunction with a single question. Warren finds a similarity in MacLeish to Wordsworth.

Items: Con, FR, P33, 6.

Whittemore, Reed. "MacLeish and Democratic Pastoral." Sewanee Review, LXI (1953), 700-709.

A discussion of Collected Poems, 1917-1952 which reviews his poetry in order to demonstrate that he can be designated a "covert pastoral" poet. According to Whittemore, MacLeish has been most attracted to images from nature. "And the theme dominating all his phases appeared to be essentially pastoral: life is richest and best in its elemental forms." Some of MacLeish's verse might be described as "Hair-on-the-chest Pastoral or Democratic Pastoral."

Items: CP52, 3, 4, 8, 13, 14, 16, 17.

Wilson, Edmund. "The Omelet of A. MacLeish." New Yorker, XXXIV, Jan. 14, 1939, pp. 23-24.

A "profile" of MacLeish is presented in a poem in the form of "The Hamlet of A. MacLeish." The poem alludes to the early influences of Pound and Eliot, some of the more well known lyrics, and the public poems of the Thirties.

Wilson, Edmund. "Archibald MacLeish and the Word," in Classics and Commercials: A Literary Chronicle of the Forties. New York, 1950, pp. 3-9.

A discussion of MacLeish's view on the role of the poet in society as expressed in several essays during the Thirties (see A Time to Speak. Boston, 1940). In particular, Wilson attacks MacLeish's statements to the effect that the poet must defend "the integrity of the word." According to Wilson, MacLeish's position, if actually put into practice, would mean the acceptance of propaganda, good or bad, simply because it consists of words. Writers not reacting to propaganda would be like bankers considering it against their interests to notify authorities that conterfeit money was in circulation. "Words, for MacLeish, are apparently ends in themselves -- not a technique for understanding."

Winters, Yvor. In Defense of Reason. Denver, 1951, pp. 22, 134, 572.

A survey of modern poetry. MacLeish is included in several attacks on free-verse poets. "The rather limp versification of Mr. Eliot and Mr. MacLeish is inseparable from the spiritual limpness that one feels behind the poems."

Witham, W. T. "Archibald MacLeish," in Panorama of American Literature. New York, 1947, pp. 302-304.

A very brief biography of MacLeish with no critical comment.

Zabel, Morton D. "The Cinema of Hamlet." Poetry, XLIV (1934), 150-159. Republished in Literary Opinion in America. ed. M. D. Zabel, 1937, pp. 415-426.

A study of the poems that appear in Poems: 1924-1933 centering on the lack of resolution in the development of MacLeish as a poet. Zabel contends that MacLeish is wrong to attempt to turn his sensibility and sincerity to external matters and depersonalize the human consciousness of them. Zabel admits that this depersonalization can be accomplished, but contends that when MacLeish has attempted it, he has failed to produce his best poetry by succeeding and has produced great poetry when he failed

Items: Con, FR, P33, 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13.

Zabel, Morton D. "The Poet on Capitol Hill." Partisan Review, VIII (1941), pp. 2-19, 128-145.

This article reviews the public life of MacLeish and is a study of his essays concerning the role of the intellectual in public affairs. Zabel was prompted to write this article by MacLeish's appointment as Librarian of Congress. In this article Zabel cites MacLeish's prose articles to demonstrate vacillation on major issues in America prior to the appointment. He denies consistency in MacLeish's essays as regards poetry's role. He (see chapter one of this thesis) charges MacLeish's poetry with derivation from the same poets MacLeish (in 1939) consigned to the pre-war period because they were not products of the human and political necessities of the present world. He also charges that MacLeish's "public poems" are inconsistent with the poets own prose pronouncements on poetry.

Item: 16.

Section IV

Criticism of J.B.

Atkinson, Brooks. "Archibald MacLeish's New Play 'J. B.'" New York Times, April 24, 1958, p. 37.

A review of the Yale production of J. B. MacLeish has managed to bring a religious theme into a worldly environment equivalent to that of the Book of Job. "MacLeish has a tendency to begin some of his scenes in the middle." Atkinson finds much of the writing pungent. "In its acceptance of the horrors of our century, in compassion for the characters," it is a stirring work. Mr. MacLeish "has written a play worthy of his time."

Berrigan, Daniel. "Job in Suburbia." America, Oct. 4, 1958, pp. 12-13.

The speeches in the play are wordy or borrowed. From this failure there rises a lack of dramatic fierceness. J. B. should be marked by depth of character but is not. J. B. is simply an overdrawn Main Street type. The height and breadth of the Job theme are foreign to MacLeish's play. The debate is mishandled.

Bond, Charles, M. "J. B. is Not Job." Bucknell Review, IX (1961), 272-280.

J. B. is not a modern Job; it is a caricature of Job. The problem of evil is raised partly by the fact of Job's goodness and integrity; MacLeish does not come to grips with this phase. In J. B., one finds no idea of God that calls for reverence on the part of men. MacLeish's view of the world is not that of the author of the Book of Job. In J. B. one does not see that God cared about his creation, Job, and took the initiative to come to him. MacLeish does not show that the problem of evil was not solved, but that it was overcome. MacLeish fails to see that human love must be grounded in a higher and holier love.

Brustein, Robert. "The Theatre of Middle Seriousness." Harper's, March, 1959, pp. 56-63.

The pithy language MacLeish borrowed from the Bible only underscores the weakness of his own. He has taken the magnificent English of the original masterpiece and lessened its clarity and emotional impact. God and Satan in modern role fail to illuminate the action. The play

shudders between some statement on man's relationship to God and some social statement about the horrors of the modern world; but neither statement is ever made. The resolution in human love leaves the work to end inconsequentialy.

Casper, Leonard. "The Godmask of MacLeish." Drama Critique, I (Nov. 1958), 11-12.

MacLeish's choice of a circus as a setting is too much a cliche. His devices for reconstructing the timeless now are defective. There is little characterization. The context of credibility is negligible. The language is so reduced in function that tricks of alliteration and a few metaphors serve the play's progress. J. B.'s stoic faith seems less inner assurance than conditioned reflex. J. B.'s character is ambiguous. Zuss and Nickle's explication in scene 10 contradicts the human spirit that MacLeish apparently commends.

Christiansen, Parley A. "J. B. the Critics and Me." WHR, XV (1961), 111-126.

A reaction against critical attacks on the play which are based on theological grounds. The religious objections lose their validity and relevance in the light of the author's intention. J. B. was intended to be a tragedy. Tragedy has always been a challenge to the claims of religion. The ending is organic to the play as a whole. "J. B. shows us how through terrible affliction a theist becomes a humanist, how a man loses his God in an inexplicable universe and in so doing finds himself." The love of J. B. and Sarah is as deep and profound as the reader has capacity to make it.

Ciardi, John. "The Birth of a Classic." Saturday Review, XLII, March 8, 1958, pp. 11-12, 48.

A review of the published version. "MacLeish's great technical achievement is in his forging of a true poetic stage line for our times." It answers the four basic requirements: it has range, it has recognizability as a line of poetry, it is a unit of the spoken language, and has a pace that works in the theatre. "No one else has managed such a line in our time. 'J.B.' is a great dramatization of the human position . . ." The poetry and the drama are organically one. MacLeish has been equal to his great theme. Job asked for Justice and was answered with size. Job triumphs in understanding that

he needs no forgiveness. The final position is "Man-centered" humanism. His handling of the two commentators gives unique dimenstion to the theme. J.B. adds a dimension to the accomplishment of American literature.

_____. "J. B. Revisited." Saturday Review, XLIII Jan. 5, 1960, pp. 39, 55.

Second thoughts on the play after hearing a recorded version of the script used in the Kazan production. "The speeches inserted for J. B. towards the end . . . suggest a slightly uneasy effort to clarify J. B.'s final position." From the point when God speaks to J. B., the action runs down. The assertion at the end that we must love and have courage is not enough. The self-realization of J. B. is not convincing enough to resolve firmly the question the play dramatizes. The intention of MacLeish's conception of J. B.'s God is unclear.

D'Arcy, Martin C. "'J. B.', Wrong Answer to the Problem of Evil," Catholic World, CLXL (Nov., 1960), pp. 81-85.

In the solution MacLeish offers to the problem of evil, no reference is made to immortality nor to the Christian Cross. In ignoring the first he is preparing for inevitable defeat. MacLeish takes a harsh view of God's representatives. "He does not believe that tjep;pgoams can have any regard for what he points out to be the most human feature in the story of Job." MacLeish appears to mean that it is useless to call upon divine justice or love, but there remains human love and that is enough." The point he makes is not valid or important; he reads into the story of Job something that is not there. In the "crucial sentence of the Play: 'He does not love. He is. But we do. That's the wonder,'" MacLeish rejects the knowledge "that the Lord of Justice and Goodness is truly master in the world" as well as the Christian view that the triumph of love can be seen in immortality and in the Cross. The play's answer holds out no hope for the future.

Donoghue, D. "Mood Play in Verse," in Third Voice. Princeton, New Jersey, 1959, pp. 193-212.

An examination of the genre of the mood play as written by MacLeish and others. Donoghue reaches the conclusion that J.B. is not a mood play. J.B. returns to the Aristotelian version of drama or at least its

terms. J. B. operates in terms of sharply opposed moral perspectives. MacLeish's diction is satisfying within the limits of decorum; his verse is honest. "There is a fine propriety in the scenic element in Mr. MacLeish's play."

Downer, A. S. Recent American Drama. Minneapolis, 1961, pp. 9, 11-13.

The instance of J. B. is typical of the artistic dictator, stage director, who molds both script and individual producing talents to his own image of a theatrical experience. Kazan reshaped J. B.; the result was visually and emotionally stimulating but far from the symbolic morality of the original play as produced at Yale. Kazan's production swallows the play. While the author intended to celebrate the dignity of the human spirit, the Broadway audience's experience was at the level of Hurricane Hutch and Pearl White.

Driver, Tom F. "Clean Miss." Christian Century, LXXV, (1958), 692-693.

The use of the two old ham actors is an extremely workable conception and succeeds in making God and Satan acceptable to the imagination. In the Book of Job there is no context of social or historical action for Job's suffering; therefore, the interest is in the colloquies which raise the question of God's justice. MacLeish spends half the play on J. B.'s ills, which he cannot succeed in making dramatic because "they are not tied in with the meat of the story." At the end MacLeish seems to feel that God and Satan are beside the point and he shifts interest to J. B. MacLeish jumps down from the religious plane to the humanistic. The humanistic conclusions do not follow from the religious premises. This is a dramatic as well as a logical fault. The poetry is ill-suited to the ear. (This review is based on the 1958 Yale production of the play.)

_____. "Notable, Regrettable." Christian Century, LXXVI (1959), pp. 21-22.

A review of the Kazan production. The effect of the changes in the play makes it even clearer that the poet wishes the audience to realize that J. B.'s inner strength is the source of recovery. This makes nonsense of the earlier climax when God speaks to J. B. out of the whirlwind and J. B. repents. As a play of ideas it

is refreshing. "But to the extent that its ideas are in confusion it must be adjudged unsuccessful." The play is weak dramatically but very strong theatrically. The verse is certainly right for the ear in the theatre when properly spoken.

Dunkel, Wilbur D. "Theology in the Theatre." Theology Today, XVI (April 1959), 65-69.

Dunkel considers the Kazan production a dilution of MacLeish's original play. The non-Christian will enjoy the play as produced, but the Christian thinker may question its validity." The Kazan production "passes over sin and stresses the horrible details of catastrophe." J. B. is a case wherein the producer has twisted the work of art to make a religious play non-religious for box-office appeal. "In the production, J. B.'s perception of the significance of the Voice becomes lost in the satire upon the comforters. . . one of the most magnificent features of the text becomes diffused in . . . theatricality." The production lacks reverence for the insights and overtones of Job and also of MacLeish's original text. The early premises of the work are not fulfilled. The poet drops the triumph of Job into a casual acceptance of necessity.

Fitts, Dudley. "Afflictions of a New Job." New York Times Book Review, March 23, 1958, p. 3.

A laudatory review. "A passionate work, composed with great art; a philosophical poem," says Fitts. The conclusion is "mystically right and dramatically no more improbable than that upon which it is modeled." Fitts calls the antique gags, the obvious symbols, and the occasional irruption of echoes of "Sweeney Agonistes" trivial defects.

Gassner, John. Theatre at the Crossroads. New York, 1960, pp. 298-305.

Gassner makes an issue of the fact that J.B. is a case where the university theatre production was the predecessor to a Broadway production. He uses the comparison of the two productions (Yale and Broadway) to illustrate the different natures of the two types of production. "The . . . principle followed by Broadway productions is that nothing should stand between the audience and the action and drive. For this reason the successive calamities of J. B. were merged

with considerable telescoping of the time element." The struggle between God and Devil, rather than that of J. B., was central to the Yale version. Complaints about the reduction of the Job story to commonplaces, and protests against minification are not, says Gassner, relevant in the theatre. MacLeish uses minification "justifiably in treating the comforters as modern praters of . . . doctrines." J. B. is adequate for the intentions of the author. In the context of the theatre, the author's religious philosophy is simply an integral part of the actions and emotions of the characters. Much of the literary criticism of J. B. is not valid in the theatre.

Gledhill, Preston R. "JB: Successful Theatre Versus 'Godless' Theology." Brigham Young University Studies, III (Winter 1961), 9-14.

Current world conditions contribute to the self-identification of the age with Job's sufferings and plaintive cries. His tragedies are our great tragedies. Like Job, we are much more willing to confess our guilt than to admit our folly. Another reason for the success of J. B. is the "slickness with which it avoids sentimentality." It does not conform to the stereotypes found in most religious plays." According to MacLeish, "Job's God is completely indifferent to his sufferings and is interested only in cowering Job into submission." The changes introduced in the Broadway production magnify MacLeish's negativistic and un-Christian philosophy. "A solicitious, kind, wise, and loving Father in Heaven does not exist in this play. It is man on his own." MacLeish's urbane nihilism is unsatisfactory to most Christians. His paraphrasing distorts the Job of the Bible, who never loses his trust in God. Such a theme could contribute more to daily problems than the question of meaningless suffering which dominates J. B.

Hamilton, Kenneth. "The Patience of J. B." Dalhousie Review, XLI (1961), 32-39.

An estimate of J. B. "as a vehicle for communicating a philosophy of life." MacLeish discusses the justification of the ways of God offered in the Book of Job and rejects the biblical answer. He champions the values of romantic humanism. MacLeish teaches that faith and hope do not abide but that human love compensates for their loss. "MacLeish's treatment of Job as a tract for the times is unsatisfactory" in two places: Nickles fails to represent the sceptical voice in

contemporary thought, and MacLeish has made Job into a passive character who lets things happen to him without taking any action.

MacLeish seems to have been misled by a naive reliance on a few phrases in the King James Version and incorrectly casts Job in the role of Patience. J. B. lacks Job's basic convictions and "therefore does not know Job's problem." Since J. B. ignores the fact that today's questions of the problem of evil are the same that Job knew as issues of righteousness, it fails to come to grips with the religious realism of the Book of Job.

Hewes, Henry. "Yes is for a Very Rich Man." Saturday Review, XLI, May 10, 1958, p. 22.

A review of the Yale production. MacLeish's synthetic retelling of the Book of Job is a still-born classic. Because everyone knows the outcome, it becomes essentially a theological discussion. One is disappointed at the lack of characterization. J. B.'s unusual behavior in the face of adversity is not characteristic of a particular man.

"A Minority Report on 'J. B.'." Saturday Review, XLII, Jan. 3, 1959, pp. 22-23

J. B. adds little to what has been more beautifully said in the Bible or more provocatively by other modern thinkers on the subject of man's relation to God. As drama the play is not very effective; drama presupposes real characters doing things for reasons discoverable by the audience. Without this, J. B. is not a drama, it is a pageant. Though MacLeish selects tragic, would-be heart-rending, incidents, their dramatic impact is not great. The audience does not identify with J. B. Sarah's response to her misfortune is neither touching nor revealing. "We feel prompted to inquire into such things as the reason for J. B.'s abject faith in God, and even into God's reaction to the modern world. And because Mr. MacLeish has not drawn J. B. and God as specific characters, this inquiry leads nowhere."

Kazan, Elia, and Archibald MacLeish. "The Staging of a Play." Esquire, LI, May, 1959, pp. 144, 146, 148-158.

The notebooks and letters of people connected with the Broadway production of J. B. MacLeish's

notes and letters show his conception of the characters, e.g. on J. B. "His hubris is this pride combined with no thinking. This, of course, is America today." Kazan lists his original objections to the ending, and also his interpretation: "This is not a thesis play. The job is to create a Central Human Experience of our time--of which thought is certainly a part--not to prove a thesis, to illuminate a Human Dilemma!" The correspondence shows the need Kazan felt for changes in the play to make it successful as a professional production.

Krutch, J. W. "The Universe at Stage Center." Theater Arts, XLII (Aug. 1958), 9-11.

Though we never find either a solution or a meaning in the tragic aspects of life, we continue to search; this stubbornness of human nature is the most significant and impressive of all facts. This is the message of J. B. MacLeish neither merely repeats the Biblical drama nor perverts it; J. B. is compatible with it. MacLeish demonstrates that the real subject of modern drama should be the relation of man to God.

Langbaum, R. "Review of 'J. B.', by A. MacLeish." New York Herald Tribune Book Review, May 11, 1958, p. 31.

A review of the published version. Considers MacLeish's "adaptation of the Book of Job ... probably the best American verse drama so far." An authentic living voice is missing in the poetry. "After the death of J. B.'s son, which is very moving, the catastrophes become tedious." Nothing much comes of the intriguing idea of having the Comforters represent the three orthodoxies of our time. The answer to the question posed by the need to restore J. B. to his former state may seem facile after "the ruthless honesty of the play."

Lumley, Frederick. Trends in 20th Century Drama. Fair Lawn, N. J., 1960, pp. 249-250.

J. B. is an example of the new American drama which takes for its hero the little man and for its tragedy that of ordinary people in a system and civilization that challenges and threatens. Lumley considers MacLeish's handling of the theme typically American. The play within the play is a mechanism

"unworthy of the theme." MacLeish's characters are mystical, human, but not individual.

Lynch, William F. "Ritual and Drama." Commonweal, LXXI (1960), 5860588.

MacLeish puts "the cart of sensibility and thought" in front "of the horse of action." The ideas in J.B. are too artificial to find a body. The new dichotomy, offered by MacLeish, of transcendental Christian theology on one hand and non-theological experience on the other should not be believed in "'J.B.' should have begun where it ended, with an exploration of the love of Mr. and Mrs. J. B. to see if it has the actuality of love uncapitalized."

MacDonald, Dwight. "Masscult and Midcult." Partisan Review, XXVII (1960), 203-233, 589-561.

MacDonald's article is an attack on the leveling influence of today's mass media; he uses J.B. as an illustration of the media's conformity and indecisiveness. "The question of God and man is chivvied about for two hours, no decision, and then is dropped in the last scene and a new toy is offered the audience, one they are familiar with from other Broadway plays, namely love."

MacLeish, Andrew. "The Poet's Three Comforters: 'J.B.' and the Critics." Modern Drama, II (1959), 224-230.

A reply to the criticisms of Brustein, Hewes and Tynan. MacLeish questions the critics' understanding of the source-play relationship necessary to perceptive jugdment. He says that the critics have attempted "to 'discover the model' and to interpret the play by it rather than to recognize the Book of Job as a suggestive framework for a modern and broadly universal statement." The critics do not see that the style of J.B. indicates that the "dramatic tension of the play lies partly in the juxtaposition of styles and philisophic ideas rather than in 'plot tension' per se." J.B. reflects a continuous view of God as the whole Bible sees him. Attendance at the play indicates a wide gap between the critics' thoughts about it and the audiences' desires. The critics apparently want fulfillment of preconceptions of what is dramatic and what is a theme of universal interest.

MacLeish, Archibald. "About a Trespass on a Monument." New York Times, Dec. 7, 1958, sec. 2, pp. x5-x7.

An explanation of J. B. in relation to the Bible, published the Sunday prior to the opening of the Broadway production. "The structure of the poem of Job is the only one I know of which our modern history will fit." MacLeish says that Job's search, like that of the modern man was for the meaning of his afflictions and destruction. It was, says MacLeish, "by the same unquestionable authority, 'without cause.'" According to MacLeish, while Job's comforters tried to convince him he was guilty, ours today try to persuade us that we are not and can't be. Job wanted justice, he needed to know the reason for his wretchedness; our age is haunted and driven by the need to know. Job is not answered in the Bible; he is silenced. "He is brought, not to know, but to see." Job accepts that he must live his life again in spite of all he knows of himself "because he is a man."

"Man can live his truth, his truth, his deepest truth, but cannot speak it. It is for this reason that love becomes the ultimate human question. Love, in reason's terms, answers nothing . . . . What love does is to affirm" the worth of life.

"Men, our own contemporaries, have already sat as Job did on an earth reduced to ash-heap, picking in agony at the cinders of a bombscorched skin, asking Job's eternal question . . . . We know that we may sit there too. But we know something more. We know that even men like these can learn . . . 'to live it all again.'"

_____. "The Men Behind 'J. B.'." Theatre Arts, XLIII (April, 1959), 61-63.

Statements by author, producer, and director. MacLeish repeats the ideas pronounced in "About a Trespass on a Monument."

_____."The Book of Job." Christian Century, LXXVI (1959), 419-422.

MacLeish expands on his interpretation of the Book of Job. The most difficult and most urgent of the

poet's questions in this time is that of believing in life. This becomes inevitably the question of the belief in the meaning and justice of the universe. In its ultimate terms it is the question of the belief in God.

The meaning of the Book of Job is hard and the terms of the dramatic action are brutal. God recognizes from the beginning that the calamities of Job are unjustified by any guilt of Job's. Job's challenge is the challenge of his innocence. He will not be answered in the terms of his three friends; he will not be browbeaten. He knows and fears God but he respects his own integrity. Job turns from his debate with his friends to debate with God. God answers him out of the whirlwind and convicts him of his own insignificance. To the author of the Book of Job the injustice of the universe was self-evident. Job's sufferings are unjustified in the human meaning of justice.

In the struggle between good and evil God stakes his supremacy on man. Only man can prove that man loves God. Without man's love God does not exist as God, only as Creator. Love of God in spite of everything is the answer to the human cry against injustice. We love God because we believe in him and we believe in him because we can love him. Because we can love God we can conceive of him and because we can conceive of him we can live. "It is in man's love that God exists and triumphs: in man's love that life is beautiful: in man's love that the world's injustice is resolved. To hold together in our thoughts those terrible opposites of good and evil which struggle in the world is to be capable of life, and only love will hold them so."

Maddocks, M. "Review of 'J B.' by A. MacLeish." Christian Science Monitor, April 3, 1958, p. 7.

A review of the published version prior to both the Yale and Broadway productions. A brief review of the plot is given; the critical comment is in the form of question. "Has Mr. MacLeish . . . been about Job's work at all--the search for God through the riddle of good and evil? Or has he misappropriated the story of one of the most noble and thrilling religions for the ultimate purpose of a humanistic statement--and a comparatively conventional one at that?"

McLaughlin, John. "'J. B.' Under What Sign?" National Review, VI (1959), 563-64.

J. B. is subversive of Christian principle; its message is unmistakably anti-supernatural. Despite the conviction of the viewer that Nickles is wrong and must be repulsed, the expectation of this result is crushed. "If this were a Christian play, Nickles would be silenced or . . . subdued." MacLeish's closing dialogue suggests that he has a fatalistic religious outlook. MacLeish erects human love as a substitute allegiance, having dispensed with God. The sprig of forsythia "symbolizes the frailty, inconsequence, caducity, irresolution, and effeinacy of Mr. MacLeish's play." McLaughlin compliments MacLeish's idiom and phrase, which provides a supple and versatile poetic stage line. This review is based on the Yale production.

Montgomery, Marion. "On First Looking into Archibald MacLeish's Play in Verse, J. B." Modern Drama, II (Dec., 1960), 231-242

The ideas of J. B. require language resources and a conception of characters sufficient to quicken old themes. Despite some clever stage manipulation and some effective lines, the play is only fitfully alive. "MacLeish has demonstrated that he is aware of the technical complexities of play verse." Throughout the play, lines taken directly from the King James Version of "Job" are seeded with dramatic astuteness and set the pattern. Montgomery gives an extensive review of the use of verse with regard to the speech of each major character. The difficulties in language and rhythm lie in the limitation of scope MacLeish allows himself in presenting J. B. "He wants to bring his character to absolute destruction in such a way that the character becomes an 'everyman'". The universalizing is the difficulty; the use of the Prologue and the two closing scenes to comment on the play's ideas result in the loss from sight of J. B., as an individual. "The characters tend to blend into each other." MacLeish's concern with the justice-mercy paradox causes him to lose sight of the dramatic desires of the play. "The conflict of justice with mercy is resolved too overtly and too simply in the last two scenes of the play." J. B. has the feeling of a humanistic sermon.

Sherman, George L. "J. B.--The Making of a Myth." Encore, VI (May June, 1959), 26-30

In J. B., MacLeish contends that man needs something more immediate and meaningful than an awareness of God's will to justify the continuation of life in the midst of pain and suffering inflicted by unchallengeable forces. MacLeish fails to dramatize these materials; he merely presents them. "Since J B. is never successfully defined, we are not moved by him; we cannot accept his drama as real." Since J. B. is not a real character, if the audience responds to his misfortune it is the weight of them rather than the nature of them. By adhering to the old form of the morality play, MacLeish denies to his protagonist, and therefore to his audience, the telling experience. The virtual elimination of Sarah in the Kazan production erased the one character who inadvertently revealed the crucial weakness of the protagonist.

Siegel, Ben. "Miracle on Broadway: And the Box-office Magic of the Bible." Modern Drama, II (May 1960) 45-46.

Siegel makes no critical comment on J. B. He contends that the box-office success of the play was, despite the newspaper strike at the time of the opening, due to advance reviews by people like Ciardi and the favorable consideration of other mass media which were favorably impressed by the high-powered names connected with the play.

Stock, Ely. "A Masque of Reason and J. B.: Two Treatments of the Book of Job." Modern Drama, III (Feb. 1961), 378-386

A comparison of the Frost and MacLeish treatments of the Biblical story. The major plot in J. B. involves both J. B. and his wife, who undergo character transformations significant to the plot. MacLeish is faithful to the outlines of the Biblical story. In the speeches of the characters the diction is appropriate to the meanings. "MacLeish asserts the ability of man to find a way of overcoming the terrors of the universe." The most important poetic and dramatic effects achieved are accomplished in "imagery associated with vision." This demonstrates how poetic meanings may be enhanced on the stage. Stock notes, particularly, the symbolic use of the lights in the tent.

Terrien, Samuel. "J. B. and Job." Christian Century, LXXVI (1959), 9-11.

"While Mr. MacLeish's verse drama is a brilliant recreation of the story of Job, the character of J.B. is completely foreign to that of the hero who speaks in the biblical poem." MacLeish has substituted his own resolution for the answer the Jobean poet gave. The Job of the biblical poem demands justice with a bloody forehead but unbowed knees. By comparison, J. B. appears as the emasculated type of convention. "J. B. never comes to grips with the insinuations of his adversaries. Consequently he never rises, as Job does, to the stature of hero." He remains a static and unconvincing character. The dramatist substitutes the motif of human love for the mystery of divine love. The playwright changes the character of J. B. in the adjustment of his original text. J. B. no longer denies the love of God; he is willing to live again. The impression remains that the wonder of human love is unrelated to faith in God. The love that MacLeish proposes dies with the human flesh. The only God is man's feeling deified, which is a caricature of divinity, according to Terrien.

Tynan, Kenneth. "Portrait of the Artist as a Young Camera." The New Yorker, XXXIV Dec. 20, 1958, pp. 69-72

MacLeish's characters are modern but "speak in bumpy alliterative verse, and the narrative technique is similarly medieval." Tynan categorizes the play, up to the point when J. B.'s bank is destroyed, as a clear cut sociological work. "It represents the apology of American capitalism for its astonishing prosperity." The explanation that there is no divine justice, simply human love, is an ending that "cheats." "The play rests on the assumption . . . that we are judged by God. It then poses the question: Why are we judged so harshly? The answer, which destroys everything that has preceded it and entirely demolishes the original premise, is that He does not judge us at all. Having bothered us for more than two hours with an apparently insoluble problem, Mr. MacLeish blithely shrugs and confesses that it was the wrong problem to begin with." MacLeish states the right problem in the wrong way. The lack of "recognizable human response to calamity is boring." One character from a foreign culture would have clarified a good deal. MacLeish

seems determined to wound nobody and to keep up the appearance of devotion to an "antique and extravagant concept of the Deity."

Van Dusen, Henry P. "Third Thoughts on J. B." Christian Century, LXXVI (1959), 106-107

A reply to the criticisms of Driver and Terrien. "MacLeish has been scrupulously faithful to the final resolution of the scriptural Job's problem." If the restoration of wealth is a weakness in J. B., it results "from fidelity to the Bible." The Biblical story is the subject of dispute by learned scholars. Critics have judged J.B. in terms of their own interpretation of Job. The calamities that befall Job become credible in J. B. MacLeish authentically sets forth the response of modern man to parallel adversities. His J. B. is more convincing than the incredible J b of the Bible. The arguments of J. B.'s counselors are a brilliant and sound translation of the biblical confrontation into the realities of today.

Weiner, Herbert. "Job on Broadway: MacLeish's Man and the Bible's." Commentary, XVII (1959), 153-158

In the story of Job, God's power and transcendence is known by a vivid personal experience before which all questions are crushed and dissolved. This dimension of experience is absent from J. B. The characters in the play fail to convey the religiosity that is supposed to pervade their lives. The references to God are artificial and external. No one is convinced that the seeing of God has any real meaning for the thought development of the play. The impulse to survive and build again after tragedy " is a rather basic drive; we may ask whether it really must be accompanied by the 'coefficient of love.'" Love as understood by religious tradition is not the love MacLeish speaks of. Even Judaism does not blur "the two-dimensional religious-human love relationship into a purely secular horizontal relationship." This is what MacLeish does. "The real reason why J. B. leaves one dissappointed is that it is essentially a secular play treating religious problems."

White, William S. "MacLeish and the Broken Major." Harper's, April, 1959, pp. 77-78, 80.

A defense of MacLeish as a professional who has tried to do something big in the face of almost

certain failure and inevitable criticism. MacLeish "has, with measureless gallantry, turned his attention to the most unrewarding and unfashionable study in the world today." He has shown "that most of this country, including the intellectuals, lack the courage to face the harsh enigmas" that have importance for mankind. "The common views upon 'J. B.' . . . have proved that the man who merely creates--and therefore has no time to strike the wise and balanced attitudes of the dilettantes--cannot possibly win." White calls the critics who have attacked J.B. for failing to "clear up" the greatest mystery of all time "self-pampered amateurs." He says they should not call "upon a great professional to explain to them what God himself has not explained." He praises MacLeish for daring to fail.

Vita

Theodore Donald Risch was born at New London, Connecticut on November 7, 1930. His parents are Theodore A. Risch and Elanor R. Risch. He was graduated from the University of Connecticut as a Bachelor of Arts in English in June 1952.

Since June 15, 1952, he has been on continuous active duty as a member of the Regular Army of the United States. He presently holds the rank of major.

Since entering the service, Major Risch has held the usual positions for his various grades. He has been a platoon leader, Company Commander, Battalion Adjutant, and Regimental Operations officer. From September of 1960 until July of 1964 he was Assistant Professor of Military Science at Lehigh University.

Major Risch has attended various military training programs; among them are: The Advance Infantry Officers Course, completed in April 1958; The United States Army Basic Parachutist School, completed in June 1958, the United States Army Ranger School, completed in August 1958; and the United States Army Chemical, Biological, and Radiological Officer course, completed in March 1960. Major Risch is currently a student at The Foreign Service Institute of the United States Department of State, undergoing intensive language study in Spanish for subsequent assignment to the United States Army Mission, Bolivia.